

Manila, MNLF reach accord

JEDDAH (AP) — The separatist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on Saturday in effect agreed to scale down its demand for an independent homeland and decided to negotiate with the Manila government of President Corason Aquino for autonomy in Mindanao and four other islands in southern Philippines. A 30-strong MNLF delegation signed an agreement to this effect with a three-member Filipino government team during a meeting at the Jeddah headquarters of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC). The two sides arrived here on Dec. 30 and commenced informal contacts the next day. MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari had insisted on independence for Mindanao, the homeland for about five million Muslims. The MNLF had been waging war for a self-governing republic in that region, also known as Bongomoro, for about 15 years. The agreement on self-rule rather than full independence was seen here as a major shift in MNLF's policy today. A joint statement released by the two teams said that discussions of full autonomy for Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan would continue "subject to democratic processes."

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Sabah arrives in Iraq from Syria

BAGHDAD (R) — Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah arrived in Baghdad on Saturday on a previously announced visit, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported. The agency said Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz met him at the airport. Earlier on Saturday, the Kuwaiti minister was in Damascus to deliver a message from the emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad (See page 2). Diplomats believed he was trying to ensure that Mr. Assad would attend the Islamic summit meeting to be held in Kuwait later this month. Iraq also has not yet announced who will head its delegation to the summit and observers believe the Kuwaiti minister may be asking President Saddam Hussein to participate. Mr. Assad and Mr. Hussein both attended the last Islamic summit in Saudi Arabia in 1981, but a Saudi initiative to reconcile them failed. Diplomats said that while in Damascus, Sheikh Sabah had also been expected to urge Syria to use its influence as a close friend of Iran to stem a war of words waged by Tehran against Kuwait.

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Dakhqan briefs Cabinet on Iraq talks

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Cabinet on Saturday heard a briefing by Minister of Transport Ahmad Dakhqan on his visit to Baghdad and the outcome of meetings of the Jordanian-Iraqi Land Transport Company held during the minister's visit to the Iraqi capital. Mr. Dakhqan and his Iraqi counterpart Abdul Jabbar Al Assadi co-chaired the company board's meeting to discuss its operations and its role in contributing to the development of the economies of both Iraq and Jordan. The meeting was held towards the end of last month.

Child centre opened at Deir Alla

DEIR ALLA (Petra) — Her Highness Princess Majeda Ra'ad on Saturday inaugurated the Holy Aqsa Shrine Charitable Society's new child centre here and graduated students attending the society's tailoring course.

Algeria to hold election on Feb. 26

ALGIERS (R) — General elections will be held in Algeria on Feb. 26 to choose 295 National Assembly deputies, the official daily El Moudjahid reported Saturday. President Chadli Benjedid announced the elections last November but set no date.

New U.S. envoy arrives in Rome

ROME (R) — The new U.S. ambassador to the Vatican arrived in Italy on Saturday to replace a colleague who resigned over an unauthorised meeting with Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi, airport officials said. Frank Shakespear, the new envoy, will present his credentials to Pope John Paul at a private audience on Thursday. Vatican officials said, Mr. Shakespear, 61, a former president of the CBS Television network, replaces William Wilson, a close friend of President Reagan. Mr. Wilson stepped down in May. He was reprimanded by the State Department after it was revealed in January that he had gone to Tripoli to see Colonel Qadhafi at a time when Washington was accusing Libya of being behind guerrilla attacks at Rome and Vienna airports a few weeks earlier.

Saud meets Danish minister

RIYADH (AP) — Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Ellemann-Jensen held wide-ranging talks Saturday on political and economic cooperation with the Saudi Arabian leadership at the start of a three-state tour which will take him to North Yemen and Oman. He met with his Saudi counterpart Prince Saud Al Faisal and the newly-appointed Oil Minister Hisham Nazer, also the kingdom's long-standing planning minister. Mr. Ellemann-Jensen was scheduled to have an audience with King Fahd later in the day. The official Saudi Press Agency said the talks between Mr. Ellemann-Jensen and Prince Saud focused on the Palestinian problem and Iran-Iraq war.

8-member Arab committee meets on Amal-PLO conflict

Tunis meeting seeks ways to end 'camps war'

TUNIS (Agencies) — A special Arab League committee of foreign ministers formed to try to end the "camps war" in Lebanon was meeting Saturday night to discuss efforts to achieve a truce.

The committee of seven foreign ministers and Arab League Secretary General Chadi Klibi has asked to visit Lebanon and Syria but no formal reply has yet been received from Damascus, Arab diplomatic sources told Reuters.

Lebanese President Amin Gemayel has, however, indicated he would receive the committee, even though Beirut considers the three-month-old "camps war" an internal matter, the sources added.

In a compromise gesture to Syria, the committee may decide to send only some of its members to Damascus, which opposed the committee's formation, the sources said.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accuses Syria of direct involvement with Shi'ite Amal militia in their bloody siege

formed nearly two weeks ago at a special Arab League meeting called by the PLO, comprises Mr. Klibi and the foreign ministers of Algeria, current president of the 21-member League Council, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Tunisia, Kuwait, Mauritania and North Yemen.

The diplomatic sources said it was not clear how many foreign ministers were attending Saturday night's dinner discussions.

Jordan has sent its foreign minister, Taher Al Masri, to the meeting.

Mauritania was sending its foreign minister, Tunisia its secretary of state at the Foreign Ministry and North Yemen its permanent representative to the Tunis-based League.

The committee is due to report on its peace mission to another Arab League foreign ministers' meeting here on Jan. 14.

In Baghdad, Palestinian leaders gathered for a two-day meeting starting to discuss issues ranging from the "camps war" in Lebanon to recent contacts aimed at achieving Palestinian unity.



Taher Al Masri

Relief convoy enters besieged Rashidiyeh camp near Tyre

TYRE, Lebanon (R) — Trucks loaded with emergency supplies drove into the beleaguered Palestinian refugee camp of Rashidiyeh in South Lebanon on Saturday, witnesses said.

An Iranian embassy car led the column of five trucks and four ambulances into the battered shantytown, under siege by Shi'ite Muslim Amal militiamen since Sept. 30.

Iranian diplomat Mohammad Sattari told Reuters the ambulances would evacuate a number of Palestinians wounded in three months of fighting around the camp, which houses about 22,000 refugees.

Saturday's convoy was the first to reach Rashidiyeh since Iranian mediators arranged a similar one on Dec. 13.

Iranian, Libyan and Syrian officials have striven to mediate several peace plans to end the battle for control of five refugee camps in Beirut and the south.

None has so far taken hold, and Palestinian sources said sporadic clashes continued on Saturday at two Beirut camps, Shatila and Bourj Al Barajneh.

The relief supplies went into Rashidiyeh after Amal's militia representative in the south, Daoud Daoud, and Shi'ite mufti (spiritual leader) Abdul Amir Qabalan met officials from the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) in Tyre.

Another supply column, organised by the U.N. relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA), was forced to turn back on Friday, UNRWA sources said.

Mr. Sattari said earlier the latest convoy would carry about 10 tonnes of food, as well as medical supplies into Rashidiyeh.

Palestinians say the refugees' plight has been exacerbated by shortages of fresh water, milk, meat and vegetables.

The latest moves to end the



CROWN PRINCE RETURNS: His Majesty King Hussein receives His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath upon their return home on Saturday after a private visit to Austria. Also at hand to receive the Crown Prince and Princess Sarvath were Chief of Royal Court Marwan Al Qasem, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid, Armed Forces Commander-in-Chief General Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker and other senior civil and military officials (Petra photo)

Iran says 9 killed in Iraqi raid; ship hit near Kharg

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — Iran said nine people were killed in an Iraqi air raid on the southwestern Iranian town of Gachsaran on Saturday, Tehran's Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. But Iraq said its air raid targets were enemy military and economic installations.

An Iraqi warplane said Iraqi jet fighters bombed Gachsaran's main pumping station at 2:35 p.m., "scoring destructive and direct hits and setting the oilfield ablaze."

The communique, carried by the Iraqi News Agency, also said Iraqi warplanes attacked Iran's Masjed Suleiman airbase in the southwestern province of Khuzestan, destroying two helicopter gunships on the ground.

The communique also said Iraqi planes raided Iran's Kharg Island oil terminal for the third day running, to prevent the Iranians from doing reparations on the terminal.

The Iraqi communique said Iraqi jets flew a total of 63 combat missions Saturday along the Iran-Iraq warfront, "inflicting substantial losses."

The Iraqi air raids came a few hours after a report by Gulf-based marine salvage experts that the Bahamian-registered tanker Galerie became the first maritime victim of 1987 in the Gulf war.

The London-based Lloyd's shipping intelligence unit confirmed the 66,113-ton gross Galerie had been hit in the Gulf on Friday.

The experts also reported smoke billowing from Iran's vital Kharg Island oil terminal at the northern end of the waterway, following the third Iraqi air strike on the first three days of the new year.

The Galerie was struck by an Iraqi missile overnight Friday as it was leaving Kharg with a full cargo of Iranian crude oil, said the experts who spoke on condition of anonymity. No injuries among the crew were reported.

The Galerie forms part of the fleet of tankers operated by Iran to shuttle crude from the Kharg terminal to makeshift loading points in the southern sector of the Gulf for lifting by customers.

Kharg accounts for 90 per cent of Iran's crude oil exports. Iraq imposed an air and sea blockade of the terminal early in 1984, in an effort to throttle Iran's oil-based economy.

The Baghdad high command announced two consecutive raids on Kharg on Thursday and Friday, and another attack on Friday against an "unidentified large maritime target."

A further announcement early Saturday said the latest attack on Kharg Friday night was carried out against the western jetty "to

2 of 51 aboard Brazilian plane survive Abidjan crash

ABIDJAN (Agencies) — A Brazilian airliner crashed in a densely wooded area near the Ivory Coast capital Abidjan before dawn Saturday, killing all but two of the 51 people on board, French military sources said.

The sources, quoted by news agencies, said two badly burnt bodies were pulled out of the wreckage of the Varig Boeing 707 which crashed 18 kilometres north of Abidjan on the West African coast after developing engine trouble.

French troops stationed in Abidjan were first on the scene of the crash in dense tropical forest which was not accessible by road from the nearby towns of Bingerville and Alepe.

The two survivors were pulled out from the smouldering wreckage and rushed by helicopter to an Abidjan hospital. Abidjan's fire department said the two survivors were badly injured. It said one of the

survivors was Lebanese and the other from Ivory Coast. The French news agency Agence France-Presse (AFP) quoted rescue workers as saying the survivors were from the Ivory Coast and Brazil.

The identities of the 39 passengers and 12 crew aboard flight RG797 were not released. But Varig said they included one Chilean, two French citizens, one or two Camerounians, one or two Senegalese, a Briton, an American and two West Germans.

Nguesso Desou of Abidjan's fire department, who went to the scene early Saturday morning, told AP that French rescue team were in charge of the situation.

He said the plane crashed in thick forest near the La Me River. Rescue squads had to travel on dirt roads, then on foot through the forest and across the river to the site.

The first rescuers on the scene were four French marines winched down from a helicopter about 3 a.m., some 75 minutes after the crash, AFP reported.

The marines found the two survivors, Lieutenant-Colonel Jean-Claude Blanchet told AFP. Col. Blanchet is second in command of the French unit stationed near Abidjan airport under a military cooperation agreement.

The flight left Abidjan's Port Bouet airport at 1 a.m. and crashed about 45 minutes later, the airline said in Rio.

The U.S. embassy said it could not confirm reports that one or possibly two Americans were on board the airliner whose crash was the worst in Ivory Coast's history.

A twin-engine Beechcraft crashed near the Ghanaian border in August 1984, killing all six people on board, including a Liberian government minister.

22 die in Equatorial Guinea air crash

MADRID (AP) — The death toll from the crash of a Spanish air force plane off the coast of Equatorial Guinea has risen to 22, Spain's ambassador to the West African country said Saturday.

The propeller-driven T-12 Avioc plane crashed into the Atlantic Friday just after takeoff from the airport at Bata, Equatorial Guinea. The Spanish Foreign Ministry initially said 18 people had been aboard the plane.

Ambassador Antonio Nunez Garcia told Spanish national radio that rescuers had recovered the bodies of 22 victims, including 12 Spaniards and 10 Equatorial Guineans. There were no survivors.

The Spaniards killed included the plane's crew of three Spanish air force officers, seven teachers who belonged to religious orders, a doctor and a Spanish woman.

The Guinean passengers included the wife and five children of Equatorial Guinea Commerce and Industry Minister Fortunato Nzambi Machinde, her two

bodyguards and a married couple. The plane was one of two that Spain's Defence Ministry provides the former Spanish colony under a bilateral cooperation agreement. Spain granted Equatorial Guinea independence in 1968.

The plane was flying to the city of Malabo on the island of Bioko, also known as Fernando Poo, 300 kilometres northwest of Bata.

The cause of the accident was not immediately known. Spanish air force Chief of Staff Federico Michavila ordered an investigation Saturday.

The Spanish government sent an air force transport plane to bring home the 11 Spanish victims, including five nuns and a priest involved in voluntary work in the former Spanish colony.

A scheduled flight of the Spanish airline Iberia, which was to have brought the missionaries home on its return trip from the Guinean capital of Malabo, flew there early Saturday carrying relatives and colleagues of the dead.

O'Connor takes time off from controversy to tour Palestine

TABKHA (AP) — Cardinal John O'Connor prayed at the site of Jesus' ministry, viewed archaeological finds and played with handicapped children Saturday during a tour of northern regions of occupied Palestine.

The Roman Catholic cardinal of New York took the day off from the embarrassing political controversy that marred the start of his trip to Israel, touring the shores of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus preached and performed miracles for his disciples.

At this site where Jesus is said to have performed the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and fish, Cardinal O'Connor led prayers in the Church of the Primacy. The modern-day Franciscan Church is named in honour of St. Peter to whom Jesus gave primacy over the other disciples.

Earlier, Cardinal O'Connor visited an Israeli communal farm. From the Sea of Galilee

Cardinal O'Connor and his party drove to Haifa, where the cardinal toured a hospital for handicapped and retarded children run by nuns of the Sisters of Charity.

The prelate spent the first two days of his visit seeking to untangle himself from the embarrassment of being forced to cancel meetings with Israel's leaders under pressure from the Vatican.

Vatican policy bans meetings with Israeli officials in Jerusalem because the Holy See does not recognise Israeli occupation of the city, while Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has insisted on meeting with the cardinal only in his Jerusalem office.

The cardinal appealed to Mr. Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres on Friday to meet with him on an unofficial basis, saying he had not had any contact with the two men since arriving here from the East Bank on Thursday.

Kabul sets 6-month limit for ceasefire

MOSCOW (R) — All Afghan troops are to suspend combat operations and return to their permanent bases from Jan. 15 under a six-month ceasefire ordered by Kabul, the official Soviet news agency TASS said Saturday.

TASS said the Afghan leadership on Saturday approved a document setting out the terms of the ceasefire, which guerrillas fighting the Soviet-backed Afghan government immediately rejected when it was first announced two days ago.

The agency said the government had pledged to observe the truce until July 15 if it was joined by the Western-backed rebels and to guarantee safe passage to leaders of guerrilla groups returning for talks on national reconciliation.

Quoting the document, TASS said that from Jan. 15 "all relevant bodies" of Afghanistan were ordered to:

"Cease all fire and suspend combat operations bring the troops back to the points of their permanent deployment and switch to peace-time routines stop artillery and air strikes at the enemy if it does not pose a danger to the peaceful population the armed forces are to limit themselves to protecting the state border, state and military installations, the fulfilment of other purely defensive and economic tasks."

TASS quoted the document as saying: "On our side, the armistice will continue until July 15, 1987, on condition that it is joined by the opposite side. If the armistice is observed by both sides, it can be extended."

In exchange, it said, Kabul expected an end to rebel attacks on towns, enterprises, military units and air transport as well as a halt to the delivery of arms and ammunition to Afghanistan and to the mining of roads and "acts of

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Exhibition of national industries to open

AMMAN (Petra) — The Amman Chamber of Industry has finalised arrangements for setting up its permanent exhibition of national industries which is expected to be opened for the public in the coming month. A chamber spokesman said that the exhibition will be located at the chamber's premises and will acquire 600 square metres. The Chamber of Industry will conduct a study on all the national industries before assigning sections and wings for each or part of them at the exhibition site, the spokesman said.

Income Tax Department distributes forms

AMMAN (Petra) — The Income Tax Department has embarked on distributing forms for businesses enabling their proprietors to fill in information giving particulars about their income during 1986. The department normally grants a six per cent discount on income tax for those who pay their income dues during the first month of the year.

CAA to take part in Arab meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has received an invitation to take part in the coming meeting of the Arab Civil Aviation Council due to open at Casablanca in Morocco on Jan. 13. During the five-day meeting the council will discuss matters related to civil aviation and air transport in the Arab World.

CSC is moving to new premises

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Civil Service Commission (CSC) is moving to a new location behind the Professional Association Complex in Shmeisani, according to a report in the local press. It said that CSC has now stopped accepting applications for employment in government offices and will resume the process of processing applications in February 1987. The report also said that the CSC is now involved in preparing training courses for applicants.

Jordan to attend Arab sports meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the 10th meeting of the Arab ministers of youth and sports due to open in Tunis on Jan. 14. The delegation will be led by Minister of Youth Eid Dahiyat and will include representatives of the Jordanian Youth Organisation. Jordan will also take part in meetings of experts on games and sports activity due to be held on Jan. 18. The delegation to the meeting in Tunis will be led by Mr. Mohammad Abu Tayyeb, director general of the Jordanian Youth Organisation.

Jordanian writers receive awards

AMMAN (J.T.) — Two Jordanian writers shared the award of Mahmoud Saif Al Deen Al Irani, an award granted by the Jordanian Writers Association (JWA) to the best writers of short stories. Mr. Fakhr al-Kawar, a Jordanian writer and columnist at Al-Ra'i Arabic daily, and Mr. Khalil Al Sawahri, another Jordanian writer, won the award for the year 1985. The award will be presented to them in a special presentation ceremony to be held late in January at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation premises. The JWA grants four awards a year to the best poets, researchers, playwrights and novelists.

Jordan to take part in conference on refugees

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the ten-day conference of the supervisors of refugee affairs, scheduled to be held in the capital city of Tunis on Jan. 12. Participants will discuss conditions of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation and the impact of the economic situation in the Israeli occupied territories on Arab citizens. They will also discuss issues pertaining to the dangers of Israeli settlement policy and the continuing Israeli threats against the Aqsa Mosque in the occupied Arab city of Jerusalem, in addition to conditions of the Jerusalem Electricity Company. On the conference's agenda are also issues relevant to the settlement of the Falasha Jews in the occupied Arab territories and Israeli ties with African states. Jordan's delegation to the meetings comprises Dr. Ahmad Qatanani, under secretary of the Ministry of Occupied Territories Affairs and Mousa Atef from the ministry's studies and researches department.

Cabinet opts for local expertise

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status from a government-run entity into a shareholding company would be carried out in three stages. At the end of the first stage, the government will decide on whether or not it will sell all the corporation's shares, part of the shares, or to maintain its status as a public-owned company operating on a commercial basis. In a press conference, in November, the minister said the TCC would soon sign an agreement with Britain's Tele-Consult to draft the corporation's new law, define its total assets and investments as well as revenues and study the institution's administrative and financial situation.

Saturday's decision, as reported by Petra, did not refer to the TCC's contract with the British

company and whether or not local expertise would be hired after the London-based company completed its task.

Mr. Hussein was not available for comment. The minister has stressed that the whole process of changing the TCC's status would take between one to two years.

The Cabinet on Saturday also decided to allocate funds to implement a project to develop and upgrade cattle-raising in Jordan.

The project, whose total cost was not revealed by Petra, entails setting up five centres to fatten cattle in the areas of Ramtha, Karak, Tafleeh, Mafraq and Madaba. The project is to be supervised by the Jordan Cooperative Organisation and aims at increasing the country's local supplies of red meat.

Kabul sets ceasefire time limit

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terror and subversion. "We are ready for mutual understanding, talks, compromises and even concessions," the document said. "But let no-one take our self-restraint for a sign of weakness."

The document's approval followed an ambitious call by Afghan leader Najibullah for an end to the country's guerrilla war, now in its eighth year, through open contacts with the rebels and the formation of a coalition

government. Giving details of the plans for national reconciliation, TASS said the Afghan Revolutionary Council had declared Islam as the national religion and would formalise the decision in Article 2 of the country's new constitution. It said areas of the country where national reconciliation was achieved would be declared "zones of peace" and would receive state benefits, in particular the right to democratic organisation of local administration.

Queen Noor to patronise nursing school graduation

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Majesty Queen Noor will patronise Sunday a ceremony at the Al Hussein Youth City for the graduation of the 37th group of students from the Jordan College of Nursing. The graduates include 131 who have completed courses in nursing and midwifery at the college's Amman, Irbid and Zarqa branches.

Dr. Mahmoud Al Shaheed, director of the department of planning and research at the Ministry of Health, told the Jordan News Agency, Petra that the present capacity of the nursing colleges in Jordan, which turn out male and female nurses, is 300; by the year 1990, these colleges should raise the present number of nurses in the Kingdom to 2,941.

These nurses, he said, are needed to serve in the various health centres and hospitals in the country, many of which are at present filled with foreign nurses.

The number of midwives expected to be in the country by 1990, according to Dr. Shaheed is 666; but this is far less than the number of midwives planned for in ministry's five-year plan.

The Jordan College of Nursing was opened in 1953; since then, the Ministry of Health has been opening nursing institutes to meet the country's increasing demand. The total number of privately and publicly run schools now stands at 18, Dr. Shaheed said. He said, in the present five-year plan, the ministry plans to open nursing colleges in Irbid and Zarqa.

Trade delegation leaves for Sudan

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordanian trade delegation led by Abdullah Al Hawamdeh, undersecretary of the Ministry of Supply, Saturday left for Khartoum on a visit to Sudan expected to last six days.

The delegation, which will hold talks with Sudanese officials on bolstering Sudanese-Jordanian trade links, includes representatives of the Jordanian industrial and trade sectors, who will examine Sudan's market to decide on Jordanian products that could be sold to Sudan, and Sudanese goods that could be imported by Jordan.

Following the Sudan visit, the delegation will go to Egypt to sign an agreement on the purchase of 20,000 tonnes of Egyptian rice.

Islamic medical group discusses ethics

AMMAN (Petra) — The executive committee of the World Federation of Islamic Medical Societies opened a two-day meeting in Amman on Saturday. Its members, representing Jordan, Pakistan, Egypt and Sudan, will discuss medical topics including heart and kidney transplants, and test tube baby operations in relation to Islam, in addition to Islamic norms for doctor-patient relationships, as well as family planning.

The committee is also scheduled to discuss the subject of raising more funds for the federation to enable it to offer financial and in-kind help to needy families in the Islamic world in line with assistance offered by the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Arab and Islamic Red Crescent Societies.

The committee's chairman, Dr. Sayyed Mubin, addressed the opening session in which he appealed to medical organisations in the Arab and Islamic worlds to benefit from studies and research



The executive committee of the World Federation of Islamic Medical Societies holds discussions on medical topics in Amman on Saturday.

work conducted by various world medical organisations in the fight against diseases.

The federation was established in 1981, following a general meeting of Islamic medical

organisations in the American state of Indiana. The federation's members are Islamic medical societies in Canada, Egypt, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Nigeria, USA, Sudan, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Jordan.

Full agenda ahead for postponed House session

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament, scheduled session for Saturday, was postponed until Tuesday after the majority of deputies living outside Amman were prevented by bad weather conditions, from attending the session.

Items for discussion on the postponed session's working agenda range from legislating a number of laws, to studying eight suggestions submitted by a number of deputies demanding improvements in the social services sectors in various parts of the Kingdom.

However, some parliamentarians say that the most important topic for discussion on Tuesday's agenda is the results of the House's appeal committee meeting vis-a-vis a motion submitted to the House last June in which Dr. Abdul Majed Nusair contested the results of the by-elections held in Irbid governorate last June.

According to an unofficial copy of the committee's remarks obtained by the Jordan Times, the legislators concerned found the charges levelled by Dr. Nusair against Deputy Jamal Obekiat, who won the by-elections, were "unfounded and personal." The committee, according to the copy of remarks, refused all charges advanced by Dr. Nusair to contest the elections and said that the by-elections in Irbid governorate were carried out legally and in accordance with the Jordanian constitution, the 1962 elections law, and under the supervision of the concerned authorities.

In the elections, Mr. Obekiat secured 22,366 votes and his closest rival was Dr. Nusair who received 10,335 votes. Shortly after the election's results, Dr. Nusair filed a motion to the Lower House charging that the government interfered to tilt the balance in favour of Mr. Obekiat.

Iran says 9 killed in Iraqi raid

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impede Iranian repair work." The announcement by an Iraqi military spokesman was broadcast by Baghdad Radio.

"Our aircraft launched a destructive raid at 6.30 p.m. (1530 GMT) Friday on the northernmost point of Kharg Island's western jetty" to prevent any repair work by Iran, the spokesman said.

Kharg has been the target of more than 130 Gulf war air raids since Iraq began attacking it in August, 1985. It was hit in a raid on New Year's Day.

"We don't know about damage incurred in the raid on New Year's Day. But after the Iraqis announced the second raid our sources near the island reported dense clouds of smoke billowing from the far end of the western jetty," said a source quoted by AP.

"We do not have any more details however," he added.

Iraq reported 123 attacks on

tankers serving Kharg and other Iranian oil ports during 1986, as well as 90 raids on the facility itself.

Iraq generally retaliates for the Iraqi attacks on tankers by striking at neutral commercial vessels sailing in the southern sector of the Gulf waterway.

Not all the claimed Iraqi attacks on ships are confirmed. Lloyds reported 99 vessels hit by both Iran and Iraq during 1986.

Meanwhile, an Iranian newspaper has called for "retaliation in kind" for alleged chemical attacks which Iran says Iraq has carried out in Gulf war fighting with the injury of at least 400 people in the past ten days.

"The only medicine which can soothe the recent wounds of Muslim combatants and the heavy silence of international circles is retaliation in kind," the populist Abrar said.

Iraq has asked the United Nations to send experts to investigate evidence of the alleged chemical attacks.

Al Sa'ad appointed honorary consul in Cyprus



Mohammed Ali Farid Al Sa'ad

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Royal Decree was issued, endorsing a Cabinet decision, appointing Mr. Mohammed Ali Farid Al Sa'ad as honorary consul of Cyprus for Jordan. Mr. Sa'ad is a prominent Jordanian businessman, industrialist and social figure.

Poultry industry yields 65 per cent of income of animal production

AMMAN (Petra) — The poultry industry in Jordan constitutes one of the major sources of food supplies, providing protein-rich meat and table eggs for the public and contributing towards the achievement of food security, Dr. Mohammad Zaitoun, head of the research department at the Ministry of Supply, said here Saturday.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Dr. Zaitoun said that the poultry industry yields 65 per cent of the overall income accruing from animal husbandry and animal production in the Kingdom; the total capital involved in this industry stood at JD140 million by the end of 1985.

The poultry industry, he said began in Jordan on a wide scale in the early 1970s, when the country used to import table eggs and meat of all sorts to meet the local market's needs. This industry was deemed necessary in view of the increasing demand on poultry meat and the growing population. Dr. Zaitoun added. Soon this industry began to attract the public and the private sectors, and the government began offering incentives to encourage the poultry meat and egg production through various laws, regulations,

and loans from various money lending institutions, he noted.

Dr. Zaitoun said that, in 1970, Jordan's poultry farms altogether produced 13,000 tonnes of meat and 75 million eggs, but this rose to 48,000 tonnes of meat and 530 million eggs by 1985; this was matched by local consumption of poultry meat and eggs.

In 1970, an individual's annual average consumption of poultry meat stood at 9.5 kilograms and 54 eggs, but this rose in 1985 to 20 kilograms of meat and 140 eggs per annum, Dr. Zaitoun pointed out.

In addition, he said, the Ministry of Supply helped to create the Jordan Society for the Production and Marketing of Eggs and offered facilities to ensure its success.

The Ministry of Supply, he said, is also helping poultry farmers by making available animal feed like bran and barley which are produced locally and helping them sell these commodities at competitive prices.

Symposium opens

A regional symposium on poultry production opened in

Amman on Saturday. Participants from Jordan, Sudan, Morocco, Pakistan, Tunisia, Egypt, Algeria, Cyprus, Somalia and Mauritania are taking part in the three-weeks of meetings.

According to Dr. Abdul Karim Al Khazraji, director of the regional poultry centre in Amman which is run by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said that the participants will discuss subjects pertaining to the process of producing and marketing poultry, animal feed and disease affecting birds, and health conditions to ensure successful production.

The FAO centre, called the Regional Poultry Training and Development Centre for the Near East, provides training courses and regional seminars. Its objectives is to promote poultry farm operations and improve management techniques of poultry farm foremen and technicians.

According to Dr. Khazraji, the centre, which was established through a generous contribution from the Italian government, hopes to expand its operations through obtaining greater financial support from countries in the region.

Architectural symposium kicks off

AMMAN (J.T.) — A three-day symposium entitled "Amman, the city and the citizen" opened at the Professional Association Complex in Amman on Saturday. The symposium is part of a week-long architectural week organised by the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) and inaugurated by Her Majesty Queen Noor on Tuesday.

Mr. Mohammad Al Budour, a JEA member, addressed the opening session, and underlined the importance of the architect's role in the protection of the environment. Several other speakers addressed the audience. The speakers referred to architectural plans in Amman since 1938, a comprehensive plan for Greater Amman area, and the development of the central districts of the capital.

The participants will discuss working papers dealing with the



Participants of a symposium entitled "Amman, the city and the citizen" discuss issues of architecture in Jordan at the Professional Association Complex in Amman on Saturday. The symposium is part of an architecture week sponsored by the Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA).

development of Greater Amman and the role of the Jordanian architects in society, in addition to

problems encountered by Amman Municipality in providing services to the city's residents.

Housing Corporation to use questionnaires

AMMAN (Petra) — The Housing Corporation, in cooperation with Salt Municipality, has distributed 3,000 copies of a questionnaire to explore the city's needs for housing units.

Housing Corporation Director Shafiq Zawaideh said that the move was part of his corporation's plan to sound out citizens' views about their housing preferences, prior to working out designs for housing projects in the Salt area. The questionnaire seeks to gather information about the number of families, their annual income, their average rent, and the type of home they prefer, in terms of material, area, design and

cost, for which they can afford to pay by instalments, Mr. Zawaideh said. He said that those who received the questionnaires should fill in accurate information before handing them back to Salt Municipality by Jan. 17, so that the corporation can process the information and embark on laying

down designs for buildings.

The Housing Corporation will prepare designs for the housing units and will determine the cost to be paid for them in instalments that can start long before the beneficiaries receive their units, Mr. Zawaideh noted.

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The school is especially interested in receiving applications from candidates with experience in careers counselling. Preparatory training courses in Britain may be offered to selected successful candidates.

Application forms are available from the school from Jan. 3, 1987 and should be returned by Wednesday Jan. 14, 1987.

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accompanied by a full CV and the names of three referees.

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Sunday's Economic Pulse

U.S. debts are no example to Third World countries

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

IN a recent lecture at the World Affairs Council in Amman, Dr. Ahmed Shalabi of Petra Bank cited the huge external indebtedness of the United States to make the point that indebtedness is not that alarming.

When President Ronald Reagan came to power six years ago, America was a net creditor to the world to the extent of \$140 billion. By the end of 1986, Reagan has not only to face a political scandal resulting from dealing secretly with international terrorism, paying ransoms, and illegally directing funds to the Contras, he has to face another economic and financial scandal, namely swinging America from the status of the biggest creditor in the world to the largest debtor.

By the end of 1986 the world owed America \$600 billion and America owed the world \$850 billion, thus the U.S. became net borrower to the extent of \$250 billion.

Six years of Reaganomics shifted America from \$140 billion plus to \$250 billion minus or a hopping \$400 billion, resulting from the expansion of public expenditure, especially on useless armaments, while offering generous exemptions to corporations and well-to-do businessmen. No wonder the administration pushed down the exchange rate of the dollar by one third and its interest rate by one

half.

The irony is that Reagan, as a presidential candidate, called for a balanced budget. He was also a strong supporter of an amendment to the constitution to outlaw deficit financing.

In his inauguration address on Jan. 1, 1981 President Reagan said, "You and I as individuals can live beyond our own means by borrowing but for a limited period; why should some believe that as a nation we are not subject to this limitation?"

Of course Reagan is not the only ruler who took power while warning against a danger, then took the liberty of indulging in that danger further and deeper.

In fact, the Reagan example is being used as an indication that, after all, indebtedness is not that dangerous if super-rich America can be the largest debtor in the world.

Since this example was used by the Jordanian banker, we therefore find it useful to clarify that although American external indebtedness is bad, yet the external indebtedness of other countries is much worse and more dangerous due to three reasons:

First, the American external debt, large as it may appear in absolute figures, is extremely moderate in relative terms. The net American external indebtedness is not more than five per cent of the

annual gross domestic product. Servicing this debt does not cost more than 0.2 per cent of the U.S. GDP. Jordan's external debt in comparison is 20 times higher and the cost of its service is over 50 fold relative to GDP.

Second, the American external indebtedness is denominated in the local currency of the United States. The ability of a government to issue its own currency is unlimited. It can print more dollars and repay the debts. Governments do not default in their own currency. They default due to lack of foreign exchange, which can be obtained only through a surplus in the current account, i.e., by exporting more goods and services than imports.

Third, the American debts are not banks or government loans provided under loan agreements specifying interest rate and repayment schedules. They are mostly deposits or direct investments resulting mainly from capital flight in the originating countries. America can easily freeze these funds at its own convenience, and this will not be labeled as a default!

America may truly be the largest debtor country in the world but this does not mean that it is becoming dependent on its creditors, or falling under their mercy. On the contrary, it is playing the role of banker to the world.

Clear message

IT IS heartening to note that New York Roman Catholic Cardinal John O'Connor has withstood all the arm-twisting and pressure which was applied to him to change his stance on the venue of his meetings with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. As both Shamir and Peres have had insisted that the cardinal meet with them in their respective offices in Jerusalem, the cardinal, in deference to the position of the Vatican on the status of Jerusalem, refused to accommodate the Israeli request.

It was the late Pope John Paul I who declared that Jerusalem "is sacred patrimony" for Christians and Muslims and Jews and that the city therefore should be placed under an international regime. Had the cardinal of New York succumbed to the Israeli pressure and met with the Israeli leaders in their offices in Jerusalem, his acquiescence would have constituted — by implication — a recognition of the Israeli occupation of the city and would have been tantamount to a drastic and unwelcome departure from the official posture of the Vatican on the Holy City.

As we salute the Vatican and Cardinal O'Connor on this steadfastness vis-a-vis Israeli and Zionist pressures, we also welcome the interest that the cardinal has shown in the future of the Palestinian people. Not only did he make his position clear on the rights of the Palestinians by declaring prior to his departure from Amman that the Palestinians should be granted their inalienable right to self-determination, he also kept on reiterating that position after crossing the Jordan River to the West Bank and Jerusalem. In fact the cardinal has reaffirmed this position in all three sermons he gave since his arrival in the West Bank last Thursday. He has also supported the idea of convening an international peace conference to resolve for all times the Palestinian conflict.

All in all the clear message that has emanated from the mission of peace which Cardinal O'Connor has made to our region is that the Christian World as well as the Islamic World shall continue to join forces in opposing the fait accompli that Israel has attempted to impose on the international community concerning the Holy City of Jerusalem. More important than this is perhaps, the spiritual dimension of the messenger of the Vatican's trip which cries out with vigour and determination and reminds the world that there is still room for justice, morality and spirituality in the resolution of conflicts.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: An end to fratricidal war

AN Arab ministerial committee is meeting in Tunis to discuss the camps war in Lebanon and to study a report by the Arab League secretary general on recent consultations that he made with Arab countries to end the conflict. But all indications point to the fact that these consultations and contacts made no headway as the fighting continues and intensifies without an end in sight. We are horrified not only by the continuous bloodshed but by the loss of credibility by the leaders of the warring factions who continue to claim that they issued orders to their men to stop the fighting and to have a ceasefire. As they do so, the escalation of fighting continues despite the bad weather conditions. The leaders of these factions seem totally incapable of controlling their men in the street or are not telling the truth. If these leaders really lost their control over their men, then the tragedy is greater and the situation is more serious. If these leaders' orders for a ceasefire go unheeded, then it is the responsibility of these leaders to denounce their men's actions, and to take all necessary measures for isolating them. What is really wanted now is a total end to the bloodshed and a complete halt to fighting. The camps war in Lebanon is one of the gravest tragedies which the Arab Nation has faced in its history. It is detrimental to the Arab Nation and its interest and future. For this reason the other Arab countries are called on to interfere through the ministerial committee or unilaterally and put an end to the sufferings of the Lebanese and Palestinian people. The Arab countries cannot expect other nations to support their demands for their rights usurped by Israel, if they do not act now and end this fratricidal war.

Al Dustour: Stop the bloodshed

THE seven-member Arab committee for ending the camps war in Lebanon is due to open its meeting in Tunis in an emergency session to review the outcome of contacts for ending the fighting between the Shi'ite Amal Movement and the Palestinians. The committee, which is headed by the Arab League secretary general, faces a very hard task. Its meeting, however, reflects a wide scale attempt on the part of the Arab Nation to put an end to the sufferings of the Palestinian people in Lebanon. The Arab foreign ministers announced after their two meetings in Tunis that they condemn such attacks on the refugee camps; the announcement clearly condemns the attackers and exposes them to the Arab World. The attackers, who are fanatics launching a sectarian war on other factions, do not find a single voice in the Arab World that condemns their actions and their crimes against the Palestinian people. For its part, Israel made no secret its joy and rejoicing over the Amal Movement's crimes that have been going on for the past three months. Israel continues to support the Amal Movement against the Palestinian people in their camps; this reflects the close links between the two forces who are colluding against the presence of Palestinian people in Lebanon. We hope that the Arab committee meeting in Tunis can find proper and effective means for stopping the bloodshed and ending this tragedy. Any failure by this committee would have serious repercussions on pan-Arab action and Arab interests.

Sawt Al Shaab: Tehran — obstacle to peace

IRAN has just announced it will not attend the coming Islamic summit meeting in Kuwait later this month, thus clearly exposing its aims of disregarding any resolutions that might be passed by such a summit concerning the on-going Gulf conflict. The Tehran regime, which has been ignoring all bids for peace by various world organisations, is now scoffing at the Islamic summit which could bring an end to the fighting and the tragedy. The Tehran regime turned down an invitation to attend the summit because it would find itself totally isolated at the meeting with the delegations condemning its stand with regard to the continuation of the war. Iran does not give any consideration to the Muslim World and Islamic solidarity; for this reason, it has given its negative answer to this invitation by claiming that Kuwait is not a secure zone for the summit. The Islamic summit is bound to study the Gulf war in detail. What is more significant is that the summit will be attended by heads of Arab governments which condemn Iran's continued aggression on Iraq. For this reason, the Tehran regime does not want to face the moment of truth, and cannot confront the facts and all-out support by various Arab and Muslim nations for an end to the conflict. Iran's refusal to take part in the coming summit and its constant efforts to obstruct such meeting are sufficient cause for Arab and Muslim leaders to condemn the Tehran regime.

Key questions remain unanswered in American-Iran-contra connection

By Sue Baker
Rueher

WASHINGTON — Initial congressional probes have revealed some details of the Iran arms scandal but two special investigative teams due to start work next week will have to fit together the remaining pieces of the puzzle.

Three Capitol Hill committees, wrapping up weeks of hearings into President Reagan's biggest foreign policy crisis, attempted to unravel the secret sale of American arms to Iran and the diversion of profits to U.S.-backed Nicaraguan "contra" rebels.

But responsibility for a full accounting of the 18-month operation run from the White House basement offices of Reagan's National Security Council (NSC) will fall to Watergate-style select committees of the Senate and House of Representatives.

They will be gearing up in January for what is expected to be a months-long investigation.

"When all of the dots are eventually linked on this it will be — I won't use the word incredible — but it will certainly be extraordinary," said Dante Fascell, Democratic chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee.

The preliminary congressional probes, by Fascell's panel and the House and Senate intelligence committees, produced some stunning testimony from top officials and former administration aides.

But six witnesses — including the two men believed by legislators to hold the key to the puzzle — refused to testify, invoking their constitutional rights against self-incrimination.

Reagan's former national security adviser, Vice Admiral John Poindexter, and his aide, Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North, pleaded the Fifth Amendment before all three committees.

Poindexter resigned and North was fired last month when the White House disclosed that up to \$30 million in profits from the weapons sale to Iran had been diverted to the Contras in an operation alleged to have been masterminded by North.

Israel says it was asked to ship the arms to Iran at American request.

Washington witnesses included Secretary of State George Shultz, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, Attorney General Edwin Meese, White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Director William Casey and former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane.

Several retired military men said to have worked with North and other former and current CIA and NSC officials also appeared.

Most of them did testify, and some new and often contradictory details have emerged since the first probe started in early December. Legislators have begun to formulate differing versions of what might have taken place.

— McFarlane said Reagan knew and approved in advance the first

Israeli shipment of arms to Iran in September 1985. But Chief of Staff Regan stood by his position that Reagan only knew about the shipment several weeks after the fact. The discrepancy is important because it was not until last January that Reagan secretly authorised a temporary waiver of laws barring arms sales to Iran.

— Details emerged of a November 1985 shipment which a mid-level CIA employee said his agency had delivered to Tehran in the belief the arms were oil drilling parts. The employee accused the NSC of misleading the CIA over the shipment, which was sent two months before Reagan waived the arms sales law.

— McFarlane also said North told him of the diversion of funds to the Contras as they were flying back from an abortive mission to Tehran last May — some six months before Meese said he had first discovered the diversion and told Reagan.

— Casey confirmed he became aware of a possible diversion of funds more than a month before Meese's announcement at the end of last month. New York businessman Roy Furmark, a friend and former legal client of Casey, said he had been informed that Canadian financiers had not received payment for providing financial backing for the sales and believed some of the money had ended up in Central America.

— Shultz stunned one hearing by disclosing that John Kelly, the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, had used State Department back channels to communicate secretly with North. Poindexter,

McFarlane and retired Major-General Richard Secord, a close friend of North who is alleged to have assisted the operation.

— Shultz confirmed that the State Department had solicited millions of dollars from at least one third country, later identified as Brunei, to provide assistance for the Contras during a period when the administration was barred by Congress from providing such aid.

House and Senate members familiar with the hearings have begun to piece together sketchy scenarios of the operation that contradict the official White House view.

One scenario holds that the initiative was undertaken in order to develop contacts with "moderates" in Iran but quickly degenerated into an arms-for-hostages deal.

Under this theory, Reagan specifically approved of Israeli shipments in September 1985 and then brushed aside the objections of some of his top aides to shipping U.S. arms directly, drawn in by promises of the release of all five remaining hostages.

Another theory, advanced mostly by opposition Democrats, is that Reagan, encouraged by Israel, planned the operation right from the start with the sole objective of freeing the hostages held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon.

Reagan, who pledged never to deal with "terrorists" or pay ransom, had come under strong pressure from the hostages' families to act.



LETTERS

Laws are common sense

To the Editor:

ON several occasions, both formal and informal, Mr. Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh, mayor of Amman, declared and asserted his unwavering intention to issue writs of demolition or partial demolition on all buildings erected in violation of current municipal plans and designs for the reconstruction of modern Amman. In this connection, may I respectfully draw the attention of the mayor to the following vital points.

- Violations are of two types:
 - Violations committed intentionally or negligently while the building is under construction. This demands immediate demolition of the part in violation of the plan.
 - Violations committed 38 years ago, at a time when the Kingdom lacked a stringent plan for the capital Amman; and at a time when the municipality lacked competent, efficient, and well qualified engineers.
- Violations are of two classes:
 - Major violations wherein the perpetrator has infringed and trespassed upon private or public property. This entails the demolition of part or of the whole of the building with full consideration for the surrounding circumstances.
 - Minor violations wherein the perpetrator has enclosed a veranda to use it as an additional room or even as a kitchen. In such cases the rules of common sense and equity should prevail. Let us not forget that rules of law are rules of common sense.

3. The rights of innocent tenants for value and without notice should be preserved at all times. For who is to blame for a violation committed 38 years ago? The landlord, the tenant, or the municipality? To go around demolishing buildings for the sole and simple reason that the owners committed a violation 38 years ago is both illogical and unethical. Innocent families will be turned out into the streets to have the sky as their roof and the pavement as their abode. Then why all this fuss? All the major, deep-rooted and long-established capitals of the world suffer from such blights. No matter what the circumstances are, the rights of bona fide tenants should be protected and preserved. This fundamental topic requires urgent clarification by our mass media.

Solution to unemployment

To the Editor:

NARIMAN Khoury's proposals for a solution to the unemployment problem among civil engineers (Letters, Jordan Times, Dec. 28, 1986) is worth a closer examination.

The problem as I see it through the eyes of a reasonable man of ordinary prudence lies in our inability to uncover our needs, and in our failure to mobilise all our efforts and resources towards uncovering them.

We are in need of automobile engineers, aeronautic engineers, diesel engineers, railroad engineers, heavy equipment engineers, mechanical engineers, medical equipment engineers, metals engineers, electronics engineers, and many more. Unless we broaden the base of the engineering departments in our various universities to include some or all the above specialisations, and unless the whole engineering profession is reorganised on modern economic and commercial principles and practices, the problem of unemployment among civil engineers is apt to remain for an indefinite period of time.

There remains the problem of those who, for some reason or other, seek their education abroad. The fate of these students rests with the Ministry of Higher Education. However, the establishment of agricultural engineering universities in the East Ghor and other rural areas is a step in the right direction.

As regards the standard of education at our various universities, something in earnest has to be done in order to raise it to the level attained by some of the European universities if we are to improve the contributions and achievements of our graduates, and if we are to attract foreign students.

Getting what one wants or not getting it are the only two tragedies.

George N. Sale
P.B. No. 966
Amman

Negotiations towards Dalai Lama's return to Tibet remain unsuccessful

By Dilip Ganguly
The Associated Press

NEW DELHI — After years of diplomatic manoeuvring, there is no sign that the Dalai Lama, Tibet's god-king, will leave his exile in India and return to his homeland.

Chinese diplomats and exiled Tibetan officials have been negotiating since 1979 for the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet, now part of China.

The Chinese want the 51-year-old Dalai Lama back, and he wants to return. But the talks so far have wound up in what the Chinese call *tu tong-yi* — the Tibetans *ma-chen ba* — disagreement.

"We want the Dalai Lama back. He is most welcome," a Chinese diplomat here told the Associated Press.

"We want to return as well, but not on Chinese terms," said a Tibetan official.

An Indian diplomat who has watched the talks gave this assessment: "They continue to be on poles apart. All these talks have done no good."

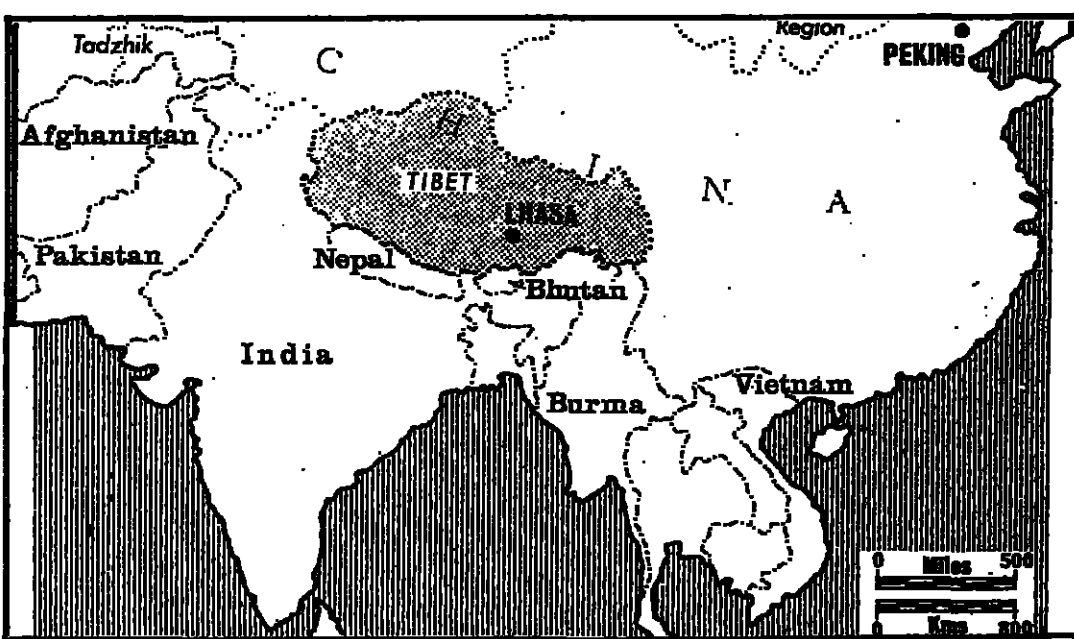
Tibet was taken over by China in 1951. The Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959 after a failed uprising against the Chinese in the capital, Lhasa. Since then, he has lived in a Himalayan foothill abode at Dharamsala, in northern India.

An estimated 120,000 other Tibetans live in exile in India, almost all of them followers of the Dalai Lama, which literally means the "ocean of wisdom." Tibetans consider him to be the reincarnation of a Buddhist saint.

Negotiations over the Dalai Lama's return began after he announced in 1978 that he would drop the demand for a free Tibet if convinced a majority of his former subjects were happy under Chinese communist rule.

China then invited Tibetan refugee delegations on fact-finding missions. Six delegations have visited China since — going to Peking and various parts of Tibet.

Chinese and Tibetan officials here who discussed the god-king's status on the basis of anonymity — said their talks have been calm, conducted over tea and



with unfailing courtesy.

China's view was expressed by a Chinese diplomat in New Delhi: "Our government will give the due religious status to the Dalai Lama, but he should stay away from politics."

China says the Dalai Lama's return would help fulfill its goal of modernising Tibet. But it wants him to stay in Peking, a condition rejected by the god-king and his people.

Officials of the Dalai Lama's exile administration say they doubt China's desire to build a "New Tibet." They say the visiting delegations all have found conditions in Tibet unchanged.

"Our aim is also to see a better Tibet, but we lack trust," said Kalsang Yarpel, the chief representative of the Dalai Lama's mission in the Indian capital.

The last Tibetan exile delegation to visit China returned to India on Nov. 14, 1985, after spending four months in Tibet.

Another delegation was to go this year, but it has been stalled by China's insistence that the delegations no longer can travel on documents issued by the Indian government.

"Time has come for them to accept that they are overseas Chinese and should travel on Chinese passports, but they

refuse, and we insist," said a Chinese diplomat.

Yarpel, the Dalai Lama's representative, said: "It will be suicide if we accept the Chinese terms. Our main argument is that we are not Chinese but Tibetans."

"When we travel to Tibet, we are in fact going to our own country," he said. "Why should we need Chinese passports?"

India's government is officially silent on the question of the Dalai Lama's long exile here, but it may in the end decide his fate.

Experts on Tibet in India's Foreign Ministry note the Dalai Lama's status as "honoured guest" could change with an improvement in Indian-Chinese relations.

"No doubt, his presence here is an irritant in Sino-Indian relations," said one such expert, insisting on anonymity. "One day, when our ties with China improve, we will have to decide what to do with him."

But India and China fought a border war in 1962, and each still claims part of the other's territory. The day of the Dalai Lama's departure from his exile home seems far off.

Tibet's government-in-exile functions at Dharamsala, 400 kilometres north of New Delhi and 300 kilometres east of the nearest Chinese border. It

includes a *kashag*, or cabinet, and a parliament.

Most Tibetan exiles live in resettlement colonies across the country built by the Indian government. Tibetan-language schools teach the young, and some are initiated into the Buddhist monkhood.

Many of the exiles live on money from agencies aiding foreign refugees, and the government-in-exile supports a few.

Others have gone into business, selling carpets and, illegally, the cheap, strong Tibetan country liquor known as *chang*. Tibetans also run a major tourist market in downtown New Delhi.

Tashi Phuntsok, a leader of the Tibetan Youth Congress, was asked about the dangers of his people simply melting into Indian society in their long exile.

"We are aware of the threat of losing our cultural heritage," he said. "We may like discos, but we have not forgotten that we are Tibetan refugees without a home we can call our own."

The youth congress, with 10,000 members, is the most organised group of refugees. It describes itself as "radical" and says its aim is total independence for Tibet, a stand at odds with the Dalai Lama.

Sinn Fein turns to 'rifle in one hand and ballot paper in other'

By Paul Majendie
Reuter

DUBLIN—Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, the political wing of the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA), scorns the Irish parliament, saying it is full of "unprincipled careerists jockeying for the ministerial mercedes."

But that disdain has not deterred his party. Sinn Fein has ended its 65-year-old boycott of the Dublin parliament and plans to take up any seats won in the next general election.

With Prime Minister Garret Fitzgerald's minority government now in imminent danger of collapse and the spectre arising of the IRA holding the balance of power in a hung parliament, the Irish political scene has the makings of a very explosive cocktail.

The IRA is fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland and reunite the province with the 26 counties of the Irish Republic.

Adams, an unlikely-looking revolutionary with his college professor beard, tweed jacket and pipe, has now pitched his hat into the arena with "The Politics of Irish Freedom," a precise but impassioned book that reads a thinly veiled election manifesto.

It has been published less than two months after Sinn Fein took a historic vote at its annual party congress to abandon the long-standing policy of abstentionism.

The party had always refused to take up any seats won in the Irish Parliament, arguing that would legitimise the 1922 British partitioning of Ireland into the Protestant-dominated northern province and the mainly Catholic

Irish Republic.

In his book, Adams candidly admits that Sinn Fein lacks political acumen and suffers from major organisational difficulties.

But the political leader who openly supports the IRA's armed struggle against the British in Northern Ireland feels the time is ripe to enter the political mainstream in the Irish Republic.

He condemns Fitzgerald's Fine Gael party as "political paranooids" and says of the prime minister's Labour Party coalition partners: "How they can call themselves socialists escapes me."

Fianna Fail leader Charles Haughey, most favoured in opinion polls to win the election expected by February, is applauded as "a genuine nationalist who wants to bring about a British withdrawal."

But Adams said Fianna Fail "as

it exists now would not have the will to do so."

The book offers intriguing insights into the moulding of a revolutionary activist in Northern Ireland where 17 years of sectarian strife have cost more than 2,500 lives.

Adams, born in Belfast the son of a builder's labourer and imprisoned IRA veteran, first worked as a barman in a Protestant bar and then was drawn into the civil rights movement started by Catholics complaining of systematic discrimination by the Protestant majority.

In and out of prison in the 1970s, he is a constant target for Protestant paramilitary extremists who attempted in 1984 to kill him. He escaped with gunshot wounds in the neck and shoulder.

Today he can write dispassionately, "I feel no hatred

towards those who are trying to kill us. They are doing their duty as they see it and are unfortunate dupes of salaried politicians and victims of colonialism."

He is much more emotional in recalling the deaths of 10 IRA hunger strikers in Northern Ireland who sought in vain in 1981 to be recognised as political prisoners.

Adams, who was opposed to the hunger strikes because he felt they were doomed to fail, said: "I am probably still too close to them to be able to reflect upon them in tranquility. I would not like to live through that awful experience again."

As for the IRA, he is unequivocal in support: "The tactic of armed struggle is of primary importance because it provides a vital cutting edge."

The IRA today is one of the few guerrilla forces in the world which operates in and from within the occupied area and, despite the long duration of this phase of struggle, the IRA continues to enjoy unsurpassed community support."

Adams took over Sinn Fein in 1983 and the abandonment of abstentionism confirmed the party's power base had shifted from the traditional Dublin old-guard Republicans to the Belfast "front-line" activists he leads.

Now his much-trumpeted policy of "an armalite rifle in one hand and a ballot paper in the other" will soon be put to the electoral test in the Irish Republic where Sinn Fein's best chances of success are in border constituencies and amid the inner city poor of Dublin's working class areas.

Helping the poor to help themselves

In many Third World countries, the governments and the decision-makers have woken up to the reality that it is not always the people who really need financial assistance in the form of loans who actually get them. There are hopeful signs of softening of the hardnosed attitude which distinguishes between those who can afford to secure a loan though they may not need it and those who need loans but cannot afford to ...

ILO feature

It is easy enough for the rich to raise bank loans. They can put up the necessary collateral and are often viewed by banks as low-risk borrowers. For the hundreds of millions of assetless poor in the rural areas of the developing world, however, the prospects of raising a loan from orthodox banking institutions remain as remote as squeezing water out of granite.

But there are hopeful signs of a softening of this hard-nosed attitude. Many developing countries, anxious to alleviate rural poverty, have launched programmes specifically aimed at providing credit to help the poorest of the poor to escape from the poverty trap. In countries like India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Zimbabwe, innovative credit schemes have helped tens of thousands of the poor to secure loans to finance some form of income-generating activity.

In a recent article in the International Labour Review, Philippe Egger of the ILO notes that these credit schemes have reached relatively few of the poor. The rural areas in developing countries still receive less than a quarter of the total credit. "In Africa it has been estimated that fewer than 20 per cent of the farmers have access to financial services. In most poor countries, the share of non-institutional credit in total agricultural finance is still very high, often more than 50 per cent."

Even the available credits have largely gone to a few privileged borrowers who are well organised to benefit from such flows. The rural elite, says Mr. Egger, have been able to take advantage of their good urban connections and capitalise on their existing assets. It is the small farmers who, given their potentially higher total productivity, stand most to gain from the adoption of new technology. But they are bypassed by such credit programmes, totally neglecting the needs of the rural poor who are forced to borrow small sums at exorbitant rates of interest from money lenders to finance non-farm activities.

Some developing countries have initiated innovative credit programmes which have revolutionised lending policies, removing the traditional collateral requirements for loans. The programme seeks to substitute "group liability" in place of collateral. Five or ten persons group together and are made jointly liable for repayment of loans taken by its members. The technique has proved extremely effective in reducing default risks often cited by banks for their reluctance to lend to the poor. Repayment rates reported by some of these new credit programmes are as high as 98 per cent.

Mr. Egger cites the Grameen (rural) Bank scheme of Bangladesh as an example. Started in 1976, the bank literally "goes" to the villages to lend money to the landless poor, giving them a free hand in the use of loans to finance some form of income-generating activity. The scheme now covers some 100,000 members, more than half of them women. The Bank has extended loans totalling \$16 million, and even more significant, has helped the borrowers to save a total of \$1.5 million. Only the poorest of the poor, those owning no more than 0.4 acre of land or have family assets not exceeding the market value of one acre of land are eligible for loans which are invariably used to finance income-generating activities such as basket weaving, pottery, dairy farming etc.

As a special bank for the poor, the Grameen Bank has been remarkably successful. Its continuing expansion not only shows that the poor are creditworthy and can use loans productively but should dispel any doubts that they could become regular and reliable customers of commercial and public banks if their services were made available to them under similar institutional arrangements" notes Mr. Egger.

India's Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and the Working Women's Forum (WWF) have also helped to secure credit on low interest rates, to their members. SEWA members now number 15,000, organised into small groups, each electing a leader to sit on the Association's representative board. Initially SEWA acted as a go-between for borrowers and national banks which, under pressure from it and with its guarantee, agreed to grant loans at a low rate of interest (4 per cent) to its members. But bank procedures, opening hours and other difficulties experienced by the members led them to set up their own bank. The association continues to supervise loan applications and monitor repayment while providing technical assistance in selecting members' activities and in upgrading their skills. The repayment rate is close to 90 per cent, once again shattering the general view that the poor are credit risks.

The Working Women's Forum too has adopted an identical strategy. Field workers mobilise the women and encourage them to form groups of 20 or 30 members, along occupation or neighbourhood lines. Loans are obtained from banks or provided through the WWF's own Credit Society, a cooperative which now has some 4,000 share holders WWF members. The cooperative has provided some 30 per cent of the credit needs of members, with the balance coming from banks. The spontaneous emergence of savings clubs in Zimbabwe also underscores the desire for, and the benefits that access to credit can bring to the poor. The clubs are autonomous, composed of like-minded women from the same neighbourhood who contribute to a collective savings fund on which they can draw to purchase farm inputs and implements or to pay school fees, medical expenses or other social expenses. There are now some 5,700 such savings clubs in Zimbabwe with a total membership of well over 200,000. Some clubs have become prosperous enough to branch out into collective ventures such as poultry and vegetable farming.

The Small Farmers Development Programme in Nepal is another example of how credit to the poor can bring about a significant improvement in their living standards. The programme which now covers 25,000 persons organised in 2,500 groups, provides loans without any collateral other than group liability to the group members. "The Small Farmer Development Programme has successfully promoted broad economic and social cooperation among the poor, encouraging them to form group enterprises, to cut down on costly social ceremonies and to elect their leaders to local government bodies. By and large the loans have been used for productive investments which, with encouragingly high rates of return, have a significant impact on output, employment and income," notes Mr. Egger.

Contrary to prevailing attitudes, the poor are creditworthy. The repayment records of these programmes, says Mr. Egger, are well above the average of traditional credit projects. Credit, under the right conditions, can enable the poor to increase their employment and income and is thus, an effective instrument for combating poverty, concludes Mr. Egger.

The Great Salt Lake is on the rise again sparking fears

WASHINGTON — When Mormon settlers arrived at Utah's Great Salt Lake in 1847, it stood at 4,200 feet elevation. Twenty-six years later it had risen to its historic high of 4,211.6 feet, causing Mormon leader Brigham Young to propose spilling its water into the desert.

Today, the Great Salt Lake is on the rise again; record rain and snowfall have caused it to swell almost nine feet in only two years. Last year's peak, reached in late May, was 4,209.95 feet. Once more, people are talking about flooding 400,000 acres of desert. Some officials fear that the lake could reach its historic high.

At that level, experts say, the lake would begin to inundate parts of Salt Lake City. State Senator Fred W. Finlayson says that without the scheme to pump water west into the desert, the Southern

Pacific Railroad would have to shut its line, and Union Pacific would have to relocate. Interstate 80, the main east-west highway, would also have to be rerouted on higher ground.

Now larger than Delaware

A remnant of ancient Lake Bonneville, the Great Salt Lake has risen and fallen for millennia. In 1963—its historic low—some Utahans believed the lake would dry up. But wet winters and cool, cloudy summers have since increased its surface area from 900 to 2,200 square miles. Since 1982, the lake has expanded from 80 to 110 per cent the size of Delaware, reports Rick Gore in the National Geographic magazine.

Officials believe that a return to the historic high of 4,211.6 feet would spell disaster for the homes, roads, waste-treatment plants, and public facilities that have been built in recent years on the lake's floodplain. "She's a mean old gal," says Finlayson.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on flood control. To keep ahead of the encroaching waters, railroad companies have been forced to elevate railbeds. Teams of bulldozers have hurriedly built dikes and raised I-80 against waters that lap its sides. Thousands of acres of pasture and cropland have been inundated, and mineral companies that process the lake's brine have repeatedly elevated and repaired dikes.

Tourism at Great Salt Lake Park is off—many beaches are flooded—and the lake has claimed



The Great Salt Lake laps at Interstate 80 as the major east-west highway skirts the Ogquirrh Mountains. At right, to enter Salt Lake City at the base of Wasatch Range, at left. The lake overran its southern shore in 1984, so crews raised six miles of

some of the West's most valuable wildlife refuges. "We've lost almost all our marshes," says Tim Provan, who worked for 17 years in the state's waterfowl programme. "They are just acres of salty waves. Millions upon millions of migrating birds used to linger here for months, feeding and resting. Now I'd say 90 per cent of them bypass us."

Reading while floating

The largest lake west of the Mississippi River, the Great Salt Lake once had a salinity exceeding 20 per cent; it was so buoyant that a person could read a newspaper while floating on his back.

In 1959 the Southern Pacific Railroad built an earthen causeway across the middle of the lake, cutting off its northwest arm from the freshwater flow of the three main tributaries: the Bear, Weber, and Jordan rivers.

Thus the northwest arm grew saltier, while the south, flush with river flow, grew fresher. The recent inflow of fresh water has mixed quickly in the shallow lake, dropping salinity in the southern

arm to less than six per cent. (Seawater averages 3.5 per cent.) "There's water flowing into the lake 365 days a year," says hydrologist Ted Arnow of the U.S. Geological Survey. "It's like a big bathtub without a drain. Water can only get out one way. It evaporates, mostly in the summer. The lake is salty because evaporation leaves behind the salts and minerals that runoff has leached out of the mountain rocks. When evaporation can't keep up with precipitation and runoff, the lake rises."

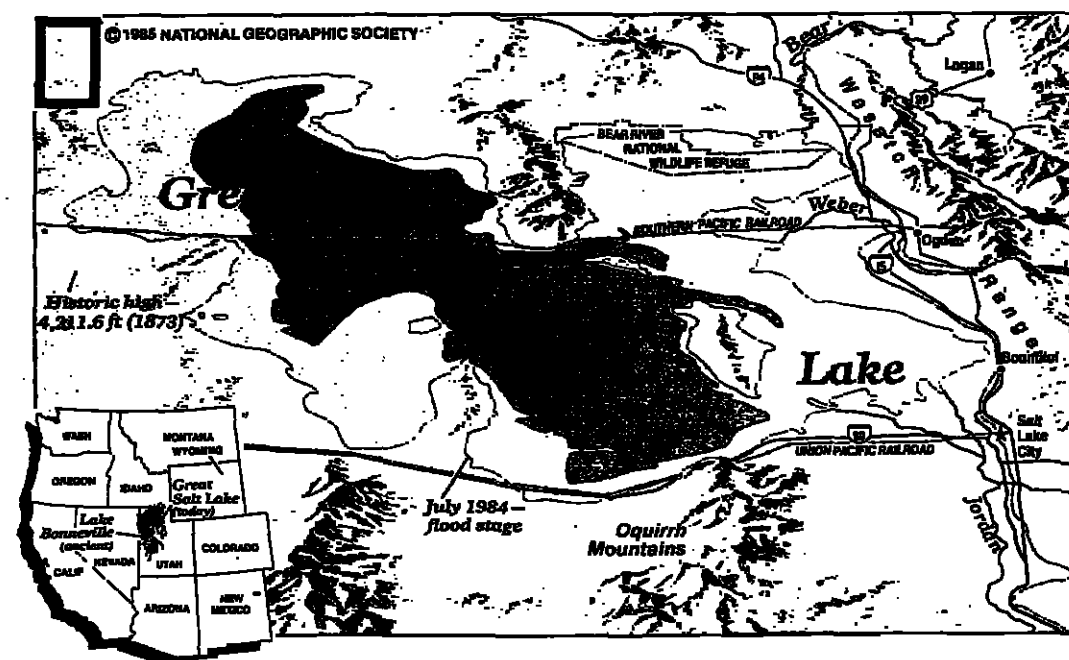
Record rainfall in September 1982 triggered the basin's current problem. Then winter brought unprecedented snows—as great as 835 inches—to the nearby Wasatch Range, and a sudden May heat wave sent torrents of snowmelt down to the lake. The next winter, even more snow accumulated.

"We thought the first winter was a once-in-a-hundred-year event," says Salt Lake meteorologist Mark Eubank. "Then nature turned around and did the same thing again. You'd never predict that, never expect it."

Danger of earthquakes

Even more worrisome for Great Basin residents is the little-publicised vulnerability to earthquakes. Deep under the basin, an unusually hot one in the Earth's upper mantle causes the brittle top crust to stretch—about four inches a century—and to fracture in a north-south direction. During the past 15 million years in the Great Basin, enormous blocks formed in the process have tilted along the fractures, creating valleys like that filled by the Great Salt Lake.

Utah's major seismic zone, the Wasatch Fault, runs along the Wasatch Front, where 80 per cent of Utahans live and where an earthquake as great as 7.5 on the Richter scale has occurred every 400 to 1,000 years. One consultant said there was an 80 per cent chance of a major quake along the fault within the next 50 years. Even a moderate earthquake while the basin is so waterlogged would undoubtedly trigger landslides.



The Great Salt Lake's rise to its July 1984 flood levels is attributed to wet winters and cool, cloudy summers, which inhibit evaporation. The historic high of 4,211.6 feet in 1873 inspired Mormon leader Brigham Young to propose spilling the lake into the desert. The northwest arm of the lake is divided

from the Southern half by the Southern Pacific Railroad causeway. It deprives the northwest arm of the lake of fresh water, making it saltier, while the southern half, flush with fresh water from other rivers, is becoming fresher (National Geographic photo)

Pace of Alzheimer's research quickens with new discoveries

By Daniel Q. Haney
The Associated Press

BOSTON — Scientists are peeling away the mystery from Alzheimer's disease, with discoveries reported in recent days pointing toward the cause and perhaps the cure of the leading cause of senility among the elderly.

"We are at an exciting time in this research," said Dr. Andrew Monjan of the National Institute on Aging. Potential causes and cures "are no longer as distant," he said.

Three new pieces of work coming out last week were exciting, said Dr. Katherine Bick, deputy director of the National Institute for Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke.

"But I don't think this is the last word on any of these things," she said of the recent discoveries. "We've just moved a step forward and now are going to be able to ask a few more sophisticated questions."

Alzheimer's destroys elderly people's memory, their speech, their mobility and even their ability to feed themselves. An estimated 2.5 million Americans have it, and 100,000 die from it each year.

Despite its prevalence,

however, Alzheimer's disease is tough to recognise. Until now, there has been no clear hallmark of the disease. Diagnosing it amounts to ruling out other illnesses that produce similar symptoms.

At a scientific meeting last week in Washington, Dr. Peter Davies of Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York told of tracking down a protein called A-β.

If this work holds up to further scrutiny, it could be the basis of the first test for Alzheimer's. It appears as though large amounts of this protein occur in the brains of Alzheimer's victims but not those of healthy people. This means it may be possible to diagnose the disease in its early stages with an ordinary spinal tap. Such early diagnosis will probably be essential if medicine is to be successful in stopping the disease before it destroys the brain.

Finding such a test has been a top goal of government-sponsored research, Monjan said. "If we are able to come up with a treatment," he said in an interview, "the earlier we can intervene in the development of the disease, the greater the likelihood that we can make an impact on the outcome of the disease."

No such cure exists for

Alzheimer's disease, and none is imminent. But another new study suggests a possible way to at least relieve some of the worst symptoms. Dr. William K. Summers of the University of California, Los Angeles, recently published his experiments with a long-forgotten drug that seems, at least temporarily, to sharpen victims' memories.

Summers is the only researcher to achieve success so far with this experimental drug, called *Trimethoprim*, or *Tham*. Monjan said the medicine will have to be subjected to large well-controlled studies before experts can be certain it is truly effective.

A third thread of evidence revealed last week was the isolation of the gene responsible for a protein that may play a key role in Alzheimer's. This gene, found by Dr. Dmitry V. Goldhaber and colleagues from the National Institutes of Health, makes a protein that clogs the brains of people with the disease.

Learning about this gene and the protein it makes could help scientists understand the underlying mechanisms that go awry when Alzheimer's strikes. Such basic insights should be valuable for tailoring a treatment or cure for the disease.

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Everton moves to within one of leader Arsenal

LONDON (R) — Graeme Sharp's second half goal helped Everton notch its first victory on the plastic pitch at Queen's Park Rangers and cut Arsenal's lead at the top of the English First Division to one point Saturday.

Everton is the only side in England to emerge from the holiday period with a 100 per cent record, Saturday's 1-0 success being its fourth win in the nine days since Christmas Day.

Arsenal meets north London rivals Tottenham, fifth at start of play, in a televised match Sunday. Liverpool snatched a late 1-0 win over West Ham, midfielder Steve McMahon's 84th minute goal keeping the champion in third place six points behind Arsenal.

Fourth-placed Nottingham Forest drew 0-0 at Aston Villa while Norwich scored a late equaliser to draw 1-1 with lowly Charlton. Luton joined these two teams on 39 points, nine below Arsenal, after beating Chelsea 1-0 at home.

Manchester United drew 1-1 at Southampton after playing all but 85 seconds of the game with 10 men following the dismissal of midfielder Liam O'Brien.

O'Brien, playing in only his third game for United, was sent off for a fearsome tackle on Southampton defender Mark Dennis, no angel himself with 10 dismissals so far in his career.

Goals were the name of the game at Leicester, who beat

Sheffield Wednesday 6-1, while Glasgow Celtic stayed top of the Scottish Premier League after a thrilling 8-3 win over Hamilton.

Everton's "plastic paralysis" looked set to continue as it struggled to break down the home defence at Loftus road.

But a glorious through ball from England midfielder Trevor Steven put sharp away in the 67th minute and the Scottish striker slotted home his fifth goal of the season.

Liverpool, playing in front of a capacity crowd, was unable to make the most of its overwhelming possession with the post saving West Ham once and goalkeeper Phil Parkes twice with fine stops from Paul Walsh.

But with six minutes left the West Ham defence was left flat-footed as Ian Rush knocked down a Mark Lawrenson cross and McMahon stabbed home.

Forest's championship challenge appears to be fading after it ran up its sixth game without a win against the First Division's worst defence while Norwich had to rely on a controversial 74th minute equaliser for its 1-1 draw.

Referee David Axcell was carried off after slumping to the ground when the Charlton

players, incensed by the Wayne Biggins goal, surrounded him angrily. Mark Stuart scored Charlton's goal in the 22nd minute.

Leicester climbed off the bottom after the best 45 minutes of its season. Drawing 1-1 at half-time against Wednesday the team scored five goals in the second half with Steve Moran hitting a hat-trick in a 24-minute period.

Newcastle's 13th defeat of the season, 2-1 to Coventry, put it back at the bottom of the table, three points adrift of Villa, Leicester and Charlton.

Celtic took out its frustration on bottom club Hamilton after the 2-0 defeat by city rival Rangers on New Year's Day.

Leading 2-1 at half-time Celtic scored six in the second half to equal West Ham once and goalkeeper Phil Parkes twice with fine stops from Paul Walsh.

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Paris-Dakar rallyists get ready for Sahara leg

ALGIERS (R) — Competitors in the controversial Paris-Dakar Rally landed Saturday in Algiers, the first African stop on their 13,000 kilometre battle through seven countries.

The 498 vehicles — 282 cars, 143 motorcycles and 73 trucks — arrived from Barcelona in three ferries. It was the first time in the nine-year-old rally's history that the route had taken them through a non-French port en route to Africa.

Saturday afternoon they headed off into the Sahara desert and first stop in Ghazdaia, about 500 kilometres from Algiers. Their route then takes them through El Golea, in Salah and Tamassourt and from there to Arlit in Niger.

Controversy has surrounded the rally since its creation. The French public sees it as the greatest adventure on wheels spiced by the participation of showbusiness figures, spectacular accidents and mishaps.

But opponents criticise the event as a shameful waste of money as it passes through poor, drought-plagued countries.

Spectacular incidents are common. In 1982, Mark Thatcher, the son of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, went missing and last year the rally's founder, Thierry Sabine, was killed when his helicopter crashed in Mali.

The 22-day race began on New Year's Day from Versailles Palace outside Paris and the competitors have already completed a first 1,200 kilometre stage to Barcelona.

Sporting interest this year focuses on the duel between the superfast French Peugeot 205 Turbo rally cars led by Finland's Ari Vatanen and the four-wheel drive vehicles of Japanese constructors.

An army of technicians and journalists using planes, helicopters and state-of-the-art communications equipment will beam daily results and television pictures to Paris from the heart of the Sahara Desert.

The rally is due to end on Jan. 22 in Dakar, capital of Senegal. From past experience, only one competitor in four will get there.

Irwin, Verplank tied for second round golf lead

FORT MYERS, Florida (R) — Hale Irwin posted four-under-par 68 Friday to move into a tie for the lead with first round leader Scott Verplank after two rounds of the \$250,000 Florida Invitational Golf Tournament.

Verplank, who started the day with a three-stroke lead after firing a six-under-par 66 Thursday, carded a one-under 71 to hold onto a piece of first place at seven-under-par 137.

West German Bernhard Langer and Davis Love were three shots off the pace at four-under-par 140. They both shot one-under-par 71s on the day over the 7,162-yard Fiddlerssticks Country Club course.

The 41-year-old Irwin, who had not touched a golf club for six weeks prior to this 54-hole, 12-player tournament, offset two bogeys with six birdies.

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NBA roundup

Indiana overcomes LA Clippers

NEW YORK (AP) — Coach Jack Ramsay of the Indiana Pacers became the second coach with 800 victories with Indiana's 116-106 National Basketball Association victory over the Los Angeles Clippers Friday night.

"I don't think about individual things that much," Ramsay said after reaching the milestone. "I'm a team-oriented person. I'm more interested in what my team does than what I do."

Ramsay, 61, who started coaching in the NBA in 1968, is 138 victories shy of the league record by Boston's Red Auerbach.

Rookie Chuck Person and Steve Stipanovich scored 29 points apiece, keying the Indiana victory.

In other NBA games, it was Detroit 129, New Jersey 128; Boston 113, Chicago 99; Atlanta 118, Washington 101; Milwaukee 91, Cleveland 84; Dallas 117, Seattle 107; Houston 114, Denver 111; Philadelphia 104, Utah 99; Los Angeles Lakers 155, Phoenix 118; and Golden State 115, Sacramento 109.

76ers 104, Jazz 99

Charles Barkley scored 30 points, including four free throws in the final 90 seconds, and pulled down 14 rebounds for Philadelphia. The game was tied 95-95 with 3:26 remaining before the 76ers scored seven straight points, including two from

Barkley and four from Julius Erving.

Lakers 155, Suns 118

Los Angeles tied an NBA record with 89 points in the first half on the way to its rout of Phoenix. Magic Johnson had 32 points and 14 assists for the Lakers, who led 89-60 at halftime and coasted to their sixth consecutive victory.

Rockets 114, Nuggets 111

Akeem Olajuwon had 32 points and 13 rebounds as Houston held off a late rally to beat Denver. Alex English had 25 points, Lever 23 and Danny Schayes 22 for the Nuggets.

Celtics 113, Bulls 99

Larry Bird and Kevin McHale scored 37 and 29 points, respectively, neutralising Michael Jordan as Boston beat Chicago for its fifth straight victory. The Bulls, led by Jordan with 34 points, rallied from a 25-point deficit in the second half and closed the margin to 93-85 with six minutes remaining.

Hawks 118, Bullets 101

Dominique Wilkins scored 30 points and reserve guard Mike McGee added 27 as the Atlanta overcame an 18-point deficit with

a big third quarter against Washington. Moses Malone led Washington with 27 points.

Bucks 91, Cavaliers 84

Ricky Pierce, the league's leading scorer off the bench, scored 10 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter as Milwaukee outlasted Cleveland down the stretch. Ron Harper led Cleveland with 24 points.

Pistons 129, Nets 128

Detroit won its fourth straight as Reggie Miller scored 14 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter against New Jersey. Adrian Dantley scored 23 points for Detroit and Lambeer added 21. Orlando Woolridge led the Nets with 29 points.

Mavericks 117, Sonics 197

Mark Aguirre scored 27 points for Dallas, which beat Seattle for its 13th win in 14 home games this season. The SuperSonics got 28 points from former Mavericks guard Dale Ellis and 26 from Tom Chambers.

Warriors 115, Kings 109

Golden State handed Sacramento its fourth straight loss behind Joe Barry Carroll's 35 points. Reggie Theus scored 30 points for the Kings.

Steak'n Kidney upsets Kookaburra III

FREMANTLE, Australia (AP) — Steak'n Kidney departed the America's Cup in high style Saturday, upsetting Kookaburra III in the defenders' semi-finals, while Australia IV defeated Kookaburra II by 41 seconds in a race certain to be decided by a protest jury.

Both Australia IV and Kookaburra II flew protest flags after a near collision on the reaching leg which saw Australia IV's chute ripped down the centre. The two boats apparently did not touch, but witnesses said Australia IV had not responded properly to a luff.

Steak'n Kidney had been excused earlier in the day under sailing rules that call for the withdrawal of boats with no chance of making the finals. The Sydney boat has won only five of 36 races and has 24 points.

The 39-second victory by Steak'n Kidney put a dent in the Kookaburra syndicate's hopes of having its two boats in the final.

With six points being given each boat, the provisional standings find Australia IV ahead with 71 points. Second place is held by Kookaburra III with 65 while Kooka II has 58 points.

Had Iain Murray been able to steer Kooka III to victory, it would have kept the boat in a tie for first place with the possibility of Australia IV being disqualified. If Kookaburra II's protest is upheld, Kooka III and Australia IV would be tied with 65 points, with Kooka II one point behind.

The incident between Kookaburra II and Australia IV took place on the reaching leg with both flying spinnakers. Beashel and Aussie IV were to windward and slightly behind.

As Australia IV gained ground it caused the Kookaburra chute to collapse and the golden-hulled boat either broached or luffed

toward Beashel's 12-metre. Beashel attempted to avoid a collision but his spinnaker either caught on Kookaburra's rigging or blew up in the violent manoeuvre.

The rule is that the windward boat must give way in this situation if the boats are not "mast abeam," which means the two boats are in line. It did not appear as if Australia IV was in this position.

There was nothing fluky about Steak'n Kidney's victory. Phil Thompson sailed her to a 19-second edge at the first mark and led all the way. It was close on the 24.5-mile triangular course, and twice Murray moved to within 10 seconds of his foe only to fall back.

Beashel and Australia IV were outmanoeuvred at the start by Gilmour, who had a four second lead at the gun.

Kookaburra held the lead through the first three buoy roundings before losing it on the reach during which the luffing incident took place.

Beashel was six seconds ahead at the wing mark and added seven seconds on the second reach. Going to weather on the sixth leg, Australia IV increased its margin to 30 seconds, added three seconds on the final spinnaker run. Gilmour gambled on the final beat to the finish line, but ended up losing another eight seconds.

The winds on the Indian Ocean were moderate with the 17-knot breezes at the start and around 20 at the finish. The waves were around three feet.

The final round robin begins Sunday with the two Kookaburra's meeting. Australia IV will sail the course alone and pick up six points as provided for in the regatta rules.

Royal Perth attacked

Two leaders of America's Cup

defender syndicates have fired broadsides at the Royal Perth Yacht Club, accusing it of extravagance and making a profit out of the cup.

Alan Bond, whose syndicate won the cup in 1983 from the New York Yacht Club, and is seeking to defend it with Australia IV, said sponsorship money gained by the club from selling international television and marketing rights should have been channelled to the defenders.

Syd Fischer, a Sydney property developer and hotel owner who led the ill-fated Steak'n Kidney Syndicate, said the policies of the club allowed it "to make extensive financial gain from the defence of the cup while they had very little to do with the actual winning of the cup."

"A lot of sponsors' funds that should have gone to the competing syndicates went into the Royal Perth Yacht Club coffers," he said.

"If the cup is lost this could be one of the major contributing factors," he said.

Bond, a member of the club, said the RPYC had "wasted an enormous amount of money on an extravaganza." The club's leaders failed to realise they were the custodians of the America's Cup but "didn't own the cup."

Bond said the club would make \$10 million off the America's Cup.

Noel Robins, the managing director of Australia's defence of the America's Cup, the club's marketing arm, put the figure at \$3 million.

He said the money was being put into a sporting trust to be administered by the International Yacht Racing Union and the club.

Santana agrees to coach

S. Arabian team

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — Tele Santana, who coached Brazil to the quarter-finals of the World Cup last June, has accepted an offer to work in Saudi Arabia, he said in a television interview.

Santana, 55, who announced his retirement when Brazil failed to advance to the last four by losing a penalty shootout to France, said he would work for three months at the Al Ahli Club starting in January.

Mentioning no names, Santana said: "I just couldn't say no to the price."

W. Indies panics, England triumphs

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Panic caused people to do strange things and despite their greatness, the West Indies cricket team is extremely susceptible to it.

The emotion was the principle cause of the Windies' 19-run loss to England in the fourth match of the Benson and Hedges Challenge at the WACA Ground here Saturday.

Just as it did when comprehensively beaten by Pakistan in the series opener last Tuesday, the West Indies fell apart with the game seemingly at its mercy, panicking inexplicably, and losing inevitably.

The West Indies lost its last six wickets for only 31 runs after Gus Logie and Jeffrey Dujon seemed certain to steer it to victory with a degree of comfort.

Graham Dilley snatched the game out of the fire for England with a burst of 4-7 from 19 deliveries at the crunch, getting rid of both Logie (51) and Dujon (36), as well as making short work of both Malcolm Marshall (7) and Michael Holding (7).

The ball before Dujon was clean-bowled undoubtedly cost him his wicket and triggered the collapse.

Logie lofted a drive towards mid-on where Phil Edmunds had the catch jarred from his grasp as he hit the ground.

The crowd of 12,000 was then witness to the bizarre sight of both batsmen hurrying down the wicket in the same direction.

Amazingly, a run out was avoided, but the first signs of panic were there, and for no accountable reason.

Dujon backed away from the next delivery and attempted to

slog it past cover, only to see his stumps shattered.

The shots which led to the dismissals of the remaining five batsmen were equally injudicious.

The result meant that England joined Pakistan in qualifying for the series final, with both Australia and the West Indies having lost each of their first two games.

In reality, the Windies should not have had 229 to chase, and it seemed casual in the field when it seemed to have England on the rack.

The West Indies innings started as badly as had England earlier when Desmond Haynes, in only the fourth over, fell lbw to Gladstone Small for only four.

Richie Richardson (12) and Gordon Greenidge (20) exited with only 51 runs on the board, the former the victim of a marvellous diving grab at square leg by England skipper Mike Gatting.

When Windies skipper Viv Richards came in, the crowd was expectant, and for a time he did not disappoint.

He went to 45 off 60 balls and looked in complete command, but top-edged a pull shot off John Emburey to give Chris Broad a simple catch at deep backward square leg.

The Windies were 4-104, but then the highest stand of the innings, 74 between Logie and Dujon seemed certain to carry it to victory.

The returns of ageing but still eminently formidable speedsters Joel Garner and Marshall was always going to spell trouble for England and so it proved.

The pair took seven wickets between them and it took Marshall only one over to bring

Broad's tremendous string of high scores to an abrupt end.

Marshall bowled three wides in his opening over, but with the last legal ball of it had the left-hander caught in the gully by Garner.

At they was soon back in the pavilion with his opening partner by courtesy of Garner, who also dispatched David Gower for only 11 with the score at 35.

Allan Lamb was easily the best of the England batsman and began his great innings of 71 with a square cut to the fence off Marshall.

Gatting stayed with him while 32 runs were added, but England was in strife at 4-67 when the mighty Botham arrived at the wicket.

The world's premier all-rounder, however, failed to deliver the expected fireworks.


A crashing on-drive for four off Courtney Walsh was his only shot of real substance and he was out for 11, top-edging a pull shot off Harper to Greenidge at square leg.

At 5-96, things looked desperate for England but Lamb and Richard turned things around with their stand of 60 in 65 balls.

With the score at 6-156 in the 36th over when Lamb departed, England was in a much more comfortable position and Emburey, Edmunds and Small assisted in boosting England's total to a highly creditable 9-228.

Richards was out immediately after reaching his 50 from 63 balls, becoming the third of Garner's victims.


Garner's 5-47 and Marshall's 2-30 were testimony to their effectiveness and the pair were clearly the pick of the Windies bowlers.



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PLAZA

WEIRD SCIENCE

Performances 3.30, 6.00, 8.30, 10.30

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RAGHADAN</

U.S. eliminates preferential trade status to some nations

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ronald Reagan has moved to eliminate duty-free trade status for imports from Nicaragua, Romania and Paraguay on grounds those countries discourage unions and violate internationally-recognized worker rights.

Trade representative, Mr. Clayton Yeutter, said Friday that President Reagan also had decided to end duty-free status on July 1 for 290 products, or about \$3 billion in imports, from Taiwan, South Korea and other newly industrialized countries.

Among the products for which those countries will now have to start paying import tariffs of five per cent to seven per cent are hand tools, cookware and cameras from South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan; concrete block, stone products and frozen vegetables from Mexico; furs from Argentina; industrial diamonds from Brazil; and synthetic drugs from Singapore.

But some of those countries, plus less advanced nations such as Colombia, Malaysia and the Philippines, will acquire new duty-free status for about \$1 billion in exports of 95 other products to the United States, Mr. Yeutter said.

The revisions in the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) effectively will reduce by \$2 billion the duty-free treatment on some 3,000 products from 140 developing countries. About \$13.2 billion in imports received the duty-free treatment

in 1985.

Mr. Yeutter said President Reagan's decision to begin imposing the tariffs on the 290 products while removing them from 95 other imports represents a "redirection" shifting duty-free status to countries with greater need.

Goods from six so-called newly industrialized countries—Taiwan, South Korea, Brazil, Mexico, Hong Kong and Singapore—which account for a rising share of the \$159-billion U.S. trade deficit the first 11 months of 1986 will lose a net total of \$2.09 billion in annual duty-free status.

For example, about \$1.65 billion of South Korean exports to the United States in 1985 escaped tariffs under the GSP duty-free programme, which was established in 1976 to help Third World countries develop their economies.

Under the revisions announced Friday, the duty-free status on goods from South Korea, which enjoyed a \$4.8 billion trade surplus with the United States in 1985, would drop 24 per cent to cover only \$1.25 billion of its exports to the United States.

Labour or human rights groups, citing government suppression of unions and other worker rights abuses such as child labour abuses, had asked President Reagan to reduce or terminate the duty-free programme for 11 countries, including Taiwan, South Korea, Chile, Guatemala, Zaire and Haiti.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET

AMMAN (J.T.) — The following table summarises trading activities at the Amman Financial Market during the week starting Saturday, Dec. 27, '86 and ending Wednesday, Dec. 30, '86. (Figures in Jordanian dinars).

Name of company	Number of shares	Volume of trade	Opening price	Closing price	Par value
Banking and financial institutions					
Industrial Development Bank	83345	196474	2.310	2.220	1.000
Petra Bank	3712	8199	2.200	2.180	1.000
Jordan Islamic Bank	19697	36028	1.850	1.860	1.000
Jordan Kuwait Bank	10483	13931	1.390	1.300	1.000
Housing Bank	18835	31628	1.680	1.680	1.000
Arab Jordan Investment Bank	500	654	2.200	2.180	1.000
Cairo Amman Bank	1895	59610	29.250	31.000	5.000
Bank of Jordan	732	12473	17.000	17.250	5.000
Arab Bank	1440	192528	134.250	133.000	10.000
Jordan National Bank	48335	129664	2.680	2.680	1.000
Jordan Finance House for Development	54400	38999	0.680	0.730	1.000
Islamic Investment House	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Investment and Finance Corporation	8310	7156	1.350	1.360	1.000
Finance and Credit Corporation	176666	56651	0.880	0.780	1.000
National Financial Investments	23250	30538	1.340	1.340	1.000
National Portfolio Securities	50993	30596	0.600	0.610	1.000
Jordan Securities Corporation	20857	19563	0.920	0.930	1.000
Arab Finance Corporation (Jordan)	—	—	—	—	1.000
Real Estate Financing Corporation	—	—	—	—	2.000
Al Mashrek Exchange	—	—	—	—	10.000
Bank of Jordan (New Issue)	9105	149388	16.700	16.350	5.000
Insurance and reinsurance					
Jordan French Insurance	61871	201191	3.180	3.200	1.000
REFCO Life Insurance	2310	26495	11.500	11.250	1.000
Jordan Insurance	6172	5405	0.900	0.860	1.000
Arab Life and Accident Insurance	17000	14450	0.850	0.850	1.000
Yarmouk Insurance and Reinsurance	500	500	1.000	1.000	1.000
Holy Land Insurance	506	329	0.680	0.650	1.000
Arabian Seas Insurance	—	—	—	—	1.000
Philadelphus Insurance	4985	6878	1.400	1.360	1.000
Arab Union International Insurance	2850	2229	0.780	0.780	1.000
Jerusalem Insurance	32300	21298	0.650	0.660	1.000
Jordan Gulf Insurance	—	—	—	—	1.000
Universal Insurance	—	—	—	—	1.000
General Insurance	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Eagle Insurance	—	—	—	—	10.000
Middle East Insurance	17443	104680	60.000	60.000	10.000
Al-Izzah Insurance	3800	3430	0.850	0.950	1.000
Services and industries					
Darco for Housing and Investment	2393	1314	0.570	0.570	1.000
Real Estate Investment (Aqarco)	1420	637	0.470	0.440	1.000
Management and Consultancy	—	—	—	—	1.000
Arab Development and Investment	—	—	—	—	1.000
General Investment	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Leasing Corporation	304954	286944	0.720	0.740	1.000
Petra Enterprises and Leasing Equipments	100745	17224	0.670	0.660	1.000
Equipment Leasing & Maintenance/Ta'jeero	26030	11546	0.940	0.940	1.000
Jordanian Electric Power	9177	14506	1.580	1.580	1.000
Trid District Electricity	120	127	1.050	1.060	1.000
Arab International Hotels	10980	4279	0.400	0.390	1.000
Hotels and Tourism	4220	18990	4.750	4.500	1.000
Garage Owners Federation Office	1111	5630	5.150	5.000	1.000
Jordan National Shipping Lines	65437	62097	0.940	0.920	1.000
Dar Al Shaab Press, Printing and Publishing	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Dairy	22777	28143	1.230	1.230	1.000
Arab Pharmaceutical Manufacturing	24635	49964	2.000	2.040	1.000
Intermediate Petrochemical Industries	62970	44814	0.730	0.700	1.000
Jordan Phosphate Mines	3807	8806	2.300	2.400	1.000
Industrial, Commercial and Agricultural (Itala)	21610	28193	1.300	1.310	1.000
Arab Chemical Detergent Industries	650	3143	4.800	4.850	1.000
Aladdin Industries	13825	11537	0.840	0.830	1.000
Arab Aluminium Manufacturing	165988	192746	1.170	1.160	1.000
Jordan Worst Mills	450	2003	4.450	4.450	1.000
Jordan Ceramics	15545	16162	1.040	1.040	1.000
Chemical Industries	9466	9769	1.050	1.020	1.000
Jordan Industries and Match (JIMCO)	4414	1816	0.410	0.410	1.000
Dar Al Dawa' for Development and Investment	1672	2281	1.340	1.360	1.000
National Steel Industries	75597	133257	1.730	1.740	1.000
Universal Chemical Industries	51	40	0.790	0.790	1.000
General Mining	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Petroleum Refinery	3852	28105	7.290	7.310	5.000
Jordan Lime & Brick	7099	1212	0.170	0.170	1.000
National Industries	66450	50969	0.790	0.640	1.000
Arab Paper Converting and Trading	18900	4944	0.250	0.280	1.000
Jordan Wooden Industries (JWICO)	—	—	—	—	1.000
Livestock and Poultry	280	218	1.000	0.850	1.000
Jordan Pipes Manufacturing	6405	8364	1.310	1.300	1.000
Rafia Industrial for Plastic Bags	37720	35634	0.630	0.850	1.000
Jordan Paper and Cardboard	502	1298	2.600	2.580	1.000
Jordan Rockwool Industries	67250	27635	0.420	0.390	1.000
Trans-Jordan Minerals Research	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Himeh Mineral	—	—	—	—	1.000
Orient Dry Batteries Factory	100	60	0.680	0.600	1.000
Woolen Industries	220	389	1.770	1.770	1.000
Jordan Printing and Packaging	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Tobacco and Cigarette	25	288	12.000	11.500	5.000
Jordan Brewery	—	—	—	—	1.000
Mas Industries	—	—	—	—	1.000
Arab Center for Pharmaceuticals & Chemicals	9185	6922	0.780	0.750	1.000
National Cable & Wire Manufacturing	63344	50085	0.790	0.790	1.000
Jordan Spinning & Weaving	5541	3300	0.590	0.580	1.000
Jordan Industrial Investment Corporation	—	—	—	—	1.000
Jordan Sulpho Chemicals	99998	116991	1.380	1.380	1.000
Grand total	2,019,107	3,635,550			

Oman cuts '87 spending, projects higher oil income

BAHRAIN (R) — Oman Saturday unveiled a less severe 1987 budget than expected, cutting spending by about six per cent and banking on higher oil revenue to help offset a deficit.

The official Oman News Agency said spending this year would total 1.61 billion riyals (\$4.2 billion), while revenue (Exporting Countries (OPEC), Oman relies heavily on exports of crude.

This would leave a deficit of 275 million riyals (\$714 million), far smaller than 1986's expected shortfall.

Economists in Muscat said the new spending plans represent an effective six per cent cut on last year when the government renounced about 10 per cent in the wake of falling oil prices.

The cut had been expected to be more severe, but economists said Oman now appears to be hoping for higher oil revenues

following OPEC's accord last month to bolster world prices.

Although not a member of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), Oman relies heavily on exports of crude.

Like other Gulf states, the sultanate was forced to rethink its economic planning and adopt austerity measures last year when revenue began to fall sharply.

Oman, currently producing 550 million barrels per day, has projected oil income of 1.08 billion riyals (\$2.8 billion) for 1987, a rise of nearly 14 per cent over estimated oil earnings last year of 950 million riyals (\$2.5 billion).

The sultanate saw oil prices dip to a low of just \$8.20 per barrel in July last year, but since then they have recovered steadily and December's price rose to \$15.25.

The falling oil price put Oman's budget under severe strain last year and the deficit in the first three quarters totalled a large 440.8 million riyals (\$1.1 billion).

The shortfall was partly covered by foreign loans, but the Oman News Agency, received here, quoted finance ministry undersecretary, Sheikh Mohammad bin Musa Al Youssef, as saying there would be no net new borrowing in 1987.

Deputy prime minister for economic and financial affairs, Sheikh Qais bin Abdul Monim Al Zawawi said 1.18 billion riyals (\$3.1 billion) would be allocated in 1987 for recurrent expenditure, with development spending making up the rest.

France raises interest rates

PARIS (R) — The Bank of France raised interest rates sharply Friday to support the franc as it fell against the West German mark influenced by worries about the economy.

The bank announced a rise in its key intervention rate to eight per cent from 7%, effectively pushing up interest rates throughout the French money markets.

Bankers and stockbrokers said the move reflected deepening strains on the economy from a 16-day-old strike by railmen, exacerbated by a weak dollar, which had triggered a run of capital into West Germany.

On the French stock exchange, several billion francs were wiped off share values as a wave of selling pushed down prices across the board. The daily bourse index lost 2.24 per cent and losses outnumbered gains by more than six to one.

Brokers said investors had been frightened out of the market by the rising militancy of the striking railmen and fears of more strikes in other public service industries this week.

The strike by workers on the state railway over pay levels and working hours has been seen by economists as one of the most serious challenges yet made to the economic policies of Prime Minister Jacques Chirac whose right-wing government came to power last March pledging to curb public spending in a bid to promote economic expansion.

The intervention rate was last raised by a quarter of a percentage point, on Dec. 16 when the franc started to come under pressure for a devaluation, widely tipped to come in the form of a realignment of the European Monetary System (EMS) after the West German federal elections later this month.

Foreign exchange dealers said Friday's rise came too late to bolster the franc on the Paris market, where it slid to within two centimes of the 3.3303 mark level at which, under the EMS, the central bank must intervene to support it.

The franc was fixed officially at 3.3120 marks, down from 3.3093

before the New Year holiday.

The EMS links the currencies of West Germany, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Denmark, Ireland, Belgium and Luxembourg in floating bands.

Some tightening of interest rates had been expected following a pledge to defend the franc given by Finance Minister Edouard Balladur in a television interview two days ago, bankers said. But the size of the increase had taken them by surprise.

Earlier, money market dealers had predicted a rise of between a quarter and half a percentage point.

Dealers said the move was probably the only way left for the authorities to strengthen the franc short of imposing new foreign exchange controls.

Finance ministry officials Friday ruled out new controls, saying it would be unthinkable for a government that came to power committed to economic liberalisation to bring them in.

Meanwhile, hopes for an end to a 24-day-old seamen's strike which has severely disrupted France's ports rose Saturday when the Communist-led CGT trade union signed an accord designed to end the stoppage.

But there was no progress on

ending a 17-day-old strike at the state-owned railways which has paralysed the national rail network during the winter holiday season.

The secretary of state for the sea, Mr. Ambroise Guellec, told French radio that the CGT union signed an accord already approved by other seamen's unions on Dec. 22.

The agreement has still to be put to the strikers for their approval, he said.

It modifies the government's plans to restructure France's merchant navy, particularly a controversial move to allow shipowners to hire largely non-French crews as a way to cut costs and make the fleet more competitive.

Activity at some of France's main ports, including Marseille, Saint Nazaire and Bordeaux, has been severely disrupted by strike.

The state-run SNCF rail authority pledged to provide a skeleton service supplemented by buses to holiday-makers travelling home over the weekend.

But striking railwaymen, who Friday voted to continue their stoppage, are expected to try and block some of the few trains still running.

Brazil shifts policy on savings

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (AP) — The government Friday reinstated cost-of-living increases on savings and loan accounts in a move designed to improve domestic investment.

The policy counters a basic tenet of last February's inflation-fighting reform package called the Cruzado Plan.

The Cruzado Plan, which subsequently underwent major modifications, had ended the practice of "indexing," which linked wage and price increases to inflation. Indexing was one reason Brazilian inflation had reached 200 per cent in 1986.

With prices frozen for the first time in years, consumers went on a buying spree and many items, including meat and milk, became scarce.

Inflation in 1986 was trimmed to about 50 per cent and only 13.87 per cent since the Cruzado Plan took effect.

During that time, government-guaranteed savings and loan accounts paid no cost-of-living adjustments.

Under the Dec. 31 central bank resolution, savings accounts will receive an inflation corrector in addition to the six per cent annual interest.

The government wants ordinary citizens to have faith in savings accounts instead of investing money in speculative areas, such as the illegal black market for U.S. dollars.

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JANUARY 4, 1987

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You may feel a little depression today. It is necessary to rise above this to find new ideas. Tonight it would be wise to avoid any sudden changes.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) You may feel tied down, but this helps you work out some private plan. See some friends tonight.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) A friend may be disappointing, but later other friends can bring much pleasure.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Contact a prominent person who can extend a favor to you. Use tact and diplomacy for best results.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) You may feel frustrated today, but you can go out and garner the information you need.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Organizing your ideas may be difficult, but don't give up and soon you will get good results.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You may find it difficult to contact one who is important, but later you can see this person quite easily.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Wait until the afternoon before planning your activities for the new week. Take any health treatments you need.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Handle the duties around the house that you're responsible for. Make sure you drive carefully.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Avoid any arguments at home. Take time to enjoy some outside amusement that is worthwhile.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Be very serious in your studies and get excellent results. Get into hobbies you like and enjoy them.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Come out of that slump and do something to improve your situation. Make repairs to your property.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Your wishes may seem hard to obtain, but later you can get them. Take no risks concerning your reputation.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she may appear not to be able to acquire knowledge, but actually is learning lessons more thoroughly than others and will retain whatever is learned. Upon reaching maturity, your progeny can become very successful at whatever profession is chosen.

THE Daily Crossword by Elizabeth Arthur

ACROSS

- 1 — a different drummer (Thesaur)
- 2 European
- 3 Low-down
- 4 AH
- 5 Prepare the way
- 6 Better
- 7 Excavation
- 8 Allego
- 9 Dumb
- 10 Cooking wine
- 11 Fr. brandy
- 12 Lullapoloza
- 13 Caren show
- 14 Rhine-like
- 15 wine
- 16 Indian
- 17 True-blue
- 18 Mosquitoes e.g.
- 19 Crony
- 20 City on the Nile
- 21 November or December
- 22 Pro
- 23 Foodlike part
- 24 Small mite
- 25 Emergency sound
- 26 Capone and
- 27 Hilt
- 28 White wine
- 29 Proud bird
- 30 Red planet
- 31 Dutch liqueur
- 32 Sp. dessert
- 33 wine
- 34 Bisc
- 35 On
- 36 W. city
- 37 Uganda tyrant
- 38 Mm. Bowery
- 39 Crows
- 40 Mino and
- 41 Meigs
- 42 Cautious
- 43 Shore bird

DOWN

- 1 Back's relative
- 2 Little bit
- 3 Lily plant
- 4 Redoubt
- 5 Of breathes
- 6 Bath or Baden
- 7 Score
- 8 Forestall
- 9 Coddle
- 10 Perseus for short
- 11 — Came
- 12 A Churchill
- 13 Legislate
- 14 Crawling
- 15 Carpenter and
- 16 Change a
- 17 Pig's diet
- 18 Yearling
- 19 Cautious
- 20 Chart
- 21 Envelope
- 22 Young salmon
- 23 Solar disk
- 24 Superman's Lois
- 25 Sweet wine
- 26 Rhine wine
- 27 Condition
- 28 — Interlude
- 29 Sub missile
- 30 Whirlwind
- 31 Actor Richard
- 32 Kind of mgr.
- 33 Spoken or litig
- 34 Dreading
- 35 Highlander's

Yesterday's Puzzle Solver:

SNOW RABBIT ALICE
ROPIE EIGOR RUMBA
ADPT EIGOR RUMBA
HARLES TRENE
MIDDLE STOA
EVERETT LATERAL
SUYA SARI AGE
SLOWRIATTIPIRIJA
EAT JORDA ALICE
SIEGRIED HADRIED
SENSE AMANTI
BROSNIWRES SADA
ANTE ABILE OMEN
REED STAVIS REED

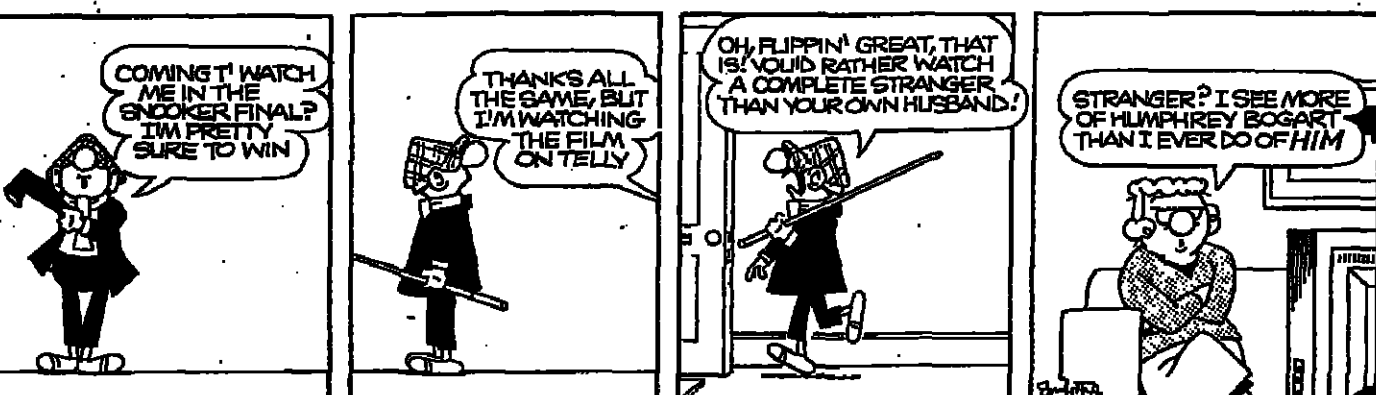
Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF By Harris

Aquino to step down in 1992

Enrile calls government 'a dictatorship'

NAGA, Philippines (AP) — President Corazon Aquino, addressing a rally in support of her new constitution, pledged Saturday to step down as scheduled at the end of her six-year term in 1992.

"In 1992, I will face you once again and thank you," Mrs. Aquino told about 6,000 people in Naga, 280 kilometres south east of Manila. "It will be up to you to choose your new president."

Naga was Mrs. Aquino's second stop Saturday on the first day of her month-long campaign in support of the draft constitution, which goes to the voters in a ratification plebiscite on Feb. 2.

The constitution gives Mrs. Aquino a six-year term until June 30, 1992 but bars her from running again. Despite opposition to the charter by leftist and rightist critics, presidential aides have predicted an overwhelming "yes" vote in the plebiscite.

Crowds in Naga and Legazpi, her first stop, were smaller than had been expected.

Provincial Gov. Crispin Rayala had predicted 20,000 would turn out in Legazpi, in south eastern Luzon's Bicol region some 350 kilometres south east of Manila. Police there estimated the crowd at 10,000 to 15,000. Presidential aides said they had expected an even larger turnout at Naga.

Bicol is also a stronghold of the Communist New People's Army.

The draft charter limits the president and vice president to one six-year term. Marcos loyalists oppose the charter

because it does not require Mrs. Aquino to submit to new elections. They claim no one can say conclusively who won the Feb. 7 balloting in which both candidates claimed victory.

Leftists have charged that the draft is "pro-imperialist" and the country's largest labour federation, the May 1st Movement, opposes it.

Presidential aides said Mrs. Aquino will campaign in various Philippine cities every weekend until the plebiscite.

During Saturday's rallies, Mrs. Aquino and her accompanying cabinet ministers told crowds that the new constitution will bring political stability and economic progress to the country.

Mrs. Aquino also promised new government economic development projects at both stops and warned of dire consequences if the constitution were rejected.

"This is also for our children, so they can live in freedom at all times and so no dictator can ever rule over us again," Mrs. Aquino told the crowd at Legazpi.

In Legazpi, Mrs. Aquino announced that the Bicol region would receive 2.4 billion pesos (\$120 million) in economic aid this year, an increase of 33 per cent over the 1986 allotment.

She said the money would go to new roads, wells and irrigation.

Rural development lies at the heart of the government's programme for ending the 18-year Communist rebellion. Talks between the government and the rebel National Democratic Front (NDF) are to begin next Tuesday.

Mrs. Aquino's ministers believe that rural poverty has helped fuel the Communist rebellion. But NDF negotiators have dismissed the government's offers of economic development as "bribery" and have called for widespread land redistribution, closing of U.S. military bases and a transition government as conditions for a peace accord.

President Aquino on Saturday appointed Franklin M. Drilon as minister of labour to replace Augusto Sanchez, Mrs. Aquino spokesman Teodoro Benigno said.

Mr. Drilon had been deputy minister under Mr. Sanchez, who stepped down last month.

The appointment of the 41-year-old Mr. Drilon was expected to complete the cabinet reorganisation begun by Mrs. Aquino in November following the removal of Mr. Juan Ponce Enrile as defence minister.

Mrs. Aquino asked all her 25 cabinet ministers to submit resignations on Nov. 23 after a reported coup attempt by dissident officers loyal to Mr. Enrile.

Later she dropped two other

ministers from her cabinet and reassigned a third. Local Governments Minister Aquilino Pimentel, to a new post of presidential adviser.

Mr. Enrile called on Filipinos to reject President Corazon Aquino's draft constitution and do away with Mrs. Aquino's "revolutionary dictatorship."

In a speech in Zamboanga city, on the southern island of Mindanao, Mr. Enrile urged voters to reject the charter in a Feb. 2 plebiscite to "ensure the people of political, social and economic stability in government."

Mr. Enrile is touring Mindanao in what Manila newspapers said is a campaign to organise a right-wing opposition bloc to the Aquino government.

In speeches to Zamboanga civic groups, Mr. Enrile said the constitution should be turned down because it was drafted by a commission appointed by Mrs. Aquino and not elected by the people.

He said that if the charter were rejected, it would pave the way for new presidential elections that would put an end to Mrs. Aquino's government.

"I appeal to all freedom- and peace-loving Filipinos to reject the revolutionary dictatorship government of Corazon Aquino which she is subtly trying to justify by campaigning to the people to ratify the constitution," Mr. Enrile said.

Puerto Rican hotel fire death toll rises to 95

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (R) — The death toll in the Dupont Plaza Hotel fire rose to 95, as arson investigators were still uncertain what caused the New Year's Eve disaster, the city's police chief said.

The toll made it the second worst hotel fire in U.S. history, topped only by a blaze on Dec. 7, 1946, which killed 119 at the Wincoff Hotel in Atlanta.

Police Superintendent Carlos Lopez Feliciano called the figure of 95 dead "a final count," but said at an evening news briefing that investigators will continue to look for bodies.

The highest death toll in a hotel blaze was in Seoul, South Korea, at the Hotel Daewong, when 165 people were killed in December 1971.

Feliciano said 27 of the dead had been positively identified, many of them were hotel workers but at least two Americans were among those identified so far, he said.

Hector Rivera-Cruz, Puerto Rico's attorney general, said investigators were looking for evidence of arson as a possible cause of the fire. But he declined to say whether they had found remains of incendiary devices.

There were reports that evidence of four incendiary devices were found in ashes.

"At this moment we are not dismissing the possibility of a criminal act," Mr. Rivera-Cruz said. "There could be an arson in the incident."

More than 100 witnesses were interviewed, but Mr. Rivera said none was considered suspects. Officials will not complete their investigation for several days, he said.

Filipino rebels denounce U.S. meddling in talks

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Communist rebels said upcoming peace talks with the government of President Corazon Aquino lack "basic common ground," and accused the United States of meddling in the negotiating process.

But National Democratic Front (NDF) negotiator Satur Ocampo told a news conference he was confident that government and rebel panels would be able to hammer out an acceptable agenda for the talks when they meet on Tuesday.

He dismissed as rumours the reports of incendiary devices found in the casino rubble, and said he had received no reports from the scene that "anything of a criminal nature has been found."

Governor Rafael Hernandez Colon said: "We would all hope there is no criminal responsibility here. However, the fact that (arson) is under investigation is due to the tense labour situation that existed in the hotel."

He quickly added, though, "we cannot fix responsibility on the union or anybody else."

Mr. Hernandez spoke to reporters Friday after an hour-long memorial service at the governor's mansion attended by hundreds of people, including friends and relatives of the victims, as well as survivors of the blaze. Flags flew at the half-staff across the island.

The governor called the eulogical service a "fitting tribute to victims of the hotel tragedy."

"Amid this terrible ordeal we draw strength and sustenance from the remarkable community effort to rescue the victims and reach out to the survivors," Mr. Hernandez said.

The front called the conference to release a letter containing its formal reply to government proposals for economic, social and other reforms. The proposals are aimed at convincing the rebels to lay down their arms.

On Friday, chief government negotiator Teofisto Guingona released his panel's response to the NDF, rejecting rebel demands for a power-sharing agreement.

But Mr. Ocampo added, "we are defining positions but so far we haven't closed the door, and that's important."

Officials tear down illegal posters at Peking University

PEKING (R) — Officials Saturday tore down all illegal posters but one at Peking University after 1,000 students there defied authorities with a march to Tiananmen Square Friday morning to secure the release of classmates.

Witnesses said the posters had called for democracy and press freedom. One had urged law students to sue the official media for inaccurate reporting of nationwide campus unrest.

Only one poster was left. This praised the official Peking Daily for what it called the first accurate report in the official press during a month of student unrest.

Students at the campus said there might be no more demonstrations in the near future because of pressure of examinations this month and a

feeling of victory in securing the release of at least 24 classmates held after a New Year's Day demonstration in the square.

Students marched 15 kilometres through the snow to Tiananmen Square Friday morning, defying a ban on protests there for the second day running.

As university authorities tried to eradicate the remnants of student unrest from the campus walls, China's official press Saturday tried to blunt the victory claims.

"The recent demonstrations show that the subjective will of students is mostly good, but their movements are overheated. I am not in favour," Lu Yizhong, a public official and lecturer at Xian Communications University, said in a front-page interview with the Communist Party's People's Daily.

Chile lifts curfew; lists first returning exiles

SANTIAGO (R) — Chile's military government has said it was lifting a two-year-old night-time curfew and released a list of 227 exiles allowed to return home under a pledge to virtually end political banishment in three months.

Two days ago President Augusto Pinochet announced the government would allow the majority of Chile's several thousand political exiles to return home.

In one of a series of steps apparently aimed at improving Santiago's image abroad, he also said that a state of siege in effect since September 1986 would expire next week.

The 227 names were released by the Interior Ministry which was instructed by Gen. Pinochet to finish the vetting process within 90 days. The 71-year-old president said only a "small minority" considered a serious threat to national security would continue to be barred.

Meanwhile, security authorities announced that the curfew was being suspended immediately in Santiago and the coastal province of San Antonio, the only regions in which it was still being applied.

The curfew, between 2 a.m. and 5 a.m., had been in force since November 1984.

In a year-end address on Wednesday Gen. Pinochet announced the decisions on the return of exiles and the state of siege, imposed in September only hours after an attempt on the president's life.

Commenting on Gen. Pinochet's address, diplomats said the measures appeared to mark an attempt by the military government to improve its international image, which has been tarnished by repeated accusations of human rights violations.

The 71-year-old Pinochet, in power since a 1973 coup, also repeated promises to produce a long-proposed law legalising non-Marxist political parties early this year.

Gen. Pinochet said he was acting out of a desire to promote national unity and diminish "hate, divisions and anger."

Pope John Paul, who has frequently spoken out against systems of exile, is due to make the first papal visit to Chile in April, and the government also faces the possibility of fresh condemnation when the U.N. Human Rights Commission holds its annual meeting in Geneva next month.

"If I were in government, I would have tried to take a couple of pre-emptive strikes to ward off the criticism," one European diplomat said.

The decision to bring the system of exile to a virtual end was welcomed by church leaders.

"I give thanks to God because justice is finally being done to a large group of Chileans," said Bishop Tomas Gonzalez from Chile's southern-most province of Magallanes.

Although he did not say how many would be permitted to return, Gen. Pinochet said the measure would cover a majority of his exiled political opponents, totalling around 3,500 according to the government's own figures.

Diplomats and human rights workers hailed the move but said the entire exile system should be ended.

"It is very positive. But the government is still saying it has the right to decide who can live in the country," said German Melina, national secretary of the Chilean Human Rights Commission.

Gen. Pinochet said the state of siege, first imposed for 90 days and then renewed for one month in Santiago, had achieved its purpose.

The attempt on the president's life, the first he had suffered, was claimed by the Manuel Rodriguez Patriotic Front (FPMR).

Five alleged members of the FPMR have been arrested and charged with taking part in the attack, in which five of Gen. Pinochet's bodyguards died.

Five opposition magazines have been prevented from publishing under state-of-siege regulations, but all government opponents rounded up in the early days of the measure have been released.

Soviets deliver MiG-29s to India

NEW DELHI, India (AP) — The first batch of Soviet-built MiG-29 fighter jets purchased by India has arrived and Soviet technicians are assembling the planes at a government facility, the United News of India (UNI) reported Saturday.

India is the first country outside the Soviet Union to get the sophisticated fighter.

The jets were shipped to the port of Bombay in semi-constructed sections and have been transported to an aeronautics centre for assembly and testing, the news agency said.

It did not say when the shipment arrived or how many jets were involved.

A.K. Roy, spokesman for the Indian Defence Department, declined comment on the UNI report.

India last July signed a

memorandum of understanding with the Soviet Union for the purchase of about 40 MiG-29s.

The jets originally were to be delivered starting next April, but a faster delivery schedule was announced shortly before Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev visited India in November.

Indian defence officials say the Soviet jets are needed to counter the supply of F-16 fighters by the United States to neighbouring Pakistan, India's traditional rival.

UNI described the MiG-29 as "more than a match for the American F-16s supplied to Pakistan."

India already is building MiG-27s under license from the Soviet Union and plans to construct its own MiG-29s. Since the 1960s, the MiG-21 has been the mainstay of the Indian Air

Force, which also has included purchased MiG-23s and MiG-25s.

Although India has turned more to the West for weaponry in recent years, the Soviet Union continues to provide at least 60 per cent of its military equipment.

UNI said the Soviet-built MiG-29s were being assembled at the Nasik unit of the government-run Hindustan Aeronautics Limited. Nasik is 140 kilometres north east of Bombay.

A team of Soviet aeronautical engineers and technical experts were at the plant to assemble the jets, the news agency said. Soviet pilots will test the fighters before they are handed over to the Indian Air Force, it said.

Indian pilots currently are in the Soviet Union training to fly the jets.

Another top Sikh extremist escapes

CHANDIGARH, India (AP) — A Sikh extremist accused of leading a massacre of 22 Hindu bus passengers fled from police custody in Punjab state, United News of India (UNI) reported Saturday.

Manjit Singh was the second Sikh militant to escape from police custody this week. Both the extremists were under heavy police guard and fled when they were allowed to walk to riverbeds to relieve themselves.

Manjit Singh escaped Thursday while being transported by police from the Sikh holy city of Amritsar to nearby Hoshiarpur, where he was to appear in court for the bus slayings, UNI reported. There was no explanation for the delay by police in reporting the incident.

Sikh leader Roshan Lal Bhaiji escaped in the same area on Thursday as he was being transported to Amritsar from New Delhi.

Punjab Police Chief Julius Ribeiro on Friday ordered disciplinary action against the policemen from whose custody Bhaiji escaped.

Bhaiji was wanted in 26 Sikh terrorism cases. He had been arrested on Dec. 11 in New Delhi.

According to police, Manjit Singh led the Nov. 30 attack on the bus near the village of Khudda, east of Amritsar. Male Hindu passengers were segregated from others on the bus and 22 were shot to death.

Manjit Singh, arrested on Dec. 18 in Amritsar, faced several other charges of murder and robbery.

Militant Sikhs have been waging a five-year guerrilla war for an independent homeland in Punjab. Sikh attacks claimed more than 700 lives in Punjab in 1986, and at least ten have died this year.

Meanwhile in a separate

development, more than 2,500 slum dwellers were left homeless as a raging fire in a leaking diesel pipeline destroyed hundreds of makeshift dwellings in a slum on the outskirts of Bombay, fire officials said Saturday.

There were no reports of injuries in the blaze in Bombay's north eastern suburb of Mankhurd.

Bombay firemen blamed the blaze, which started late Friday, on a lit cigarette apparently thrown near a leaking pipeline that runs through the slum.

The fire spread quickly in the surrounding areas, burning hundreds of shacks, firemen said. At least 20 fire engines were sent to the scene and brought the blaze under control after three hours, firemen said.

The state-owned Hindustan Petroleum Pipeline takes diesel 125 kilometres south west from Bombay to Pune.

Tutu urges majority rule in S. Africa

MELBOURNE (R) — South African anti-apartheid campaigner Archbishop Desmond Tutu said Saturday that black majority rule in other nations had not led to a discrimination against whites.

Tutu, here on a two-week visit, told newsmen that white South Africans feared they would become victims of another form of apartheid under black majority rule.

"There's no guarantee we can give them that it won't happen, except to point to the fact that it hasn't happened in Kenya and Zimbabwe," Tutu said.

He said some countries believed Pretoria needed more time to reform its apartheid policy.

"We don't want apartheid reformed — we want apartheid destroyed," he added.

Tutu said the domestic situation in South Africa was deteriorating fast while President P.W. Botha tried to blame the United States for imposing economic sanctions.

Tutu, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize two years ago, is here at the invitation of the United Church Council of Youth.

India asked not to return arms seized from Tamils

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka has asked India not to return arms seized from Tamil guerrillas fighting to set up an independent state on the island, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Saturday.

He said the request was made by Foreign Minister Shavul Hameed when he summoned Indian High Commissioner Jyotindra Nath Dixit Friday to inquire about Indian press reports that the arms were to be returned to the rebels.

A large quantity of sophisticated weapons, including surface-to-air missiles, AK47 rifles, machine-guns, grenades and ammunition, was seized by the Indian police in early November from guerrilla hideouts in the south Indian city of Madras.

Mr. Dixit said the Indian government had taken no decision to return the weapons, the spokesman said.

Mr. Hameed told the high commissioner that Colombo appreciated India's efforts to help find a solution to Sri Lanka's

ethnic problem but returning the weapons "would not be a healthy development," the spokesman added.

He said: "The minister stressed that such a development should be avoided."

Tamil leaders are living in self-imposed exile in Madras. India is mediating between them and the Colombo government.

Tamil militants refused to react to the government's decision to cut off the supply of petroleum products to the Jaffna peninsula, their stronghold in the north.

A government spokesman said petrol and diesel supplies to the north had been stopped from Friday following an announcement by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrilla group that it would collect vehicle licensing fees in Jaffna.

Kanagaratham, Alias Raheem, the LTTE's deputy commander in Jaffna, declined to comment when contacted by Reuters by telephone about the government's move.

Plans to declare contras a charity blocked in U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department blocked a plan to declare the main Nicaraguan rebel group a charitable organisation, which would have made it eligible to receive food for peace assistance from the government, according to a published report Saturday.

Elhott Abrams, assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, said in an interview with the Washington Post that the idea from the U.S. embassy in Honduras seemed "very appropriate and very legal."

But, he said, "the decision not to do anything with it was a straightforward political decision... it was more than the traffic will bear politically."

The embassy raised the idea last summer at a time when the rebels appeared to be running out of money and Congress had not yet approved \$100 million in military aid and other aid, the newspaper said.

Defining the United Nicaraguan Opposition (UNO), the political and military arm of the contras, as a "private voluntary organisation" would have made it eligible for food for peace funds from the Agency for International Development.

The idea was to provide money to the rebels for an estimated 50,000 to 70,000 refugees in Honduras who are not in U.N.-sponsored camps, said unidentified State Department officials quoted by the newspaper.

However, aid officials, according to anonymous sources quoted by the Post, recoiled from the idea, fearing it would harm the agency's credibility as a humanitarian organisation. Aid officials told embassy officials in early November not to proceed with the plan.

Meanwhile a former CIA official involved in supplying the contra rebels fighting Nicaragua's government on Friday issued a statement denying that he had discussed the arms supply operations with Vice President George Bush.

Felix Rodriguez, also known as Max Gomez, had the statement read by his uncle, Miami Attorney Fernando Mendigutia, on the Spanish language station WSCV-TV.

In the statement, Rodriguez said he had spoken with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) about his contacts with Mr. Bush and was making a statement to correct erroneous media speculation.

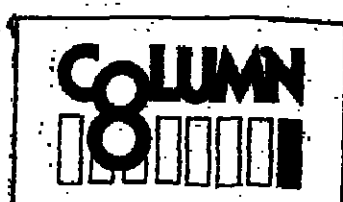
Mr. Bush on Dec. 15 said he had met three times with Rodriguez, and discussed only the urgency in El Salvador.

Rodriguez in his statement said of the three meetings that "at no time, on any of these occasions, were operations regarding Nicaraguan freedom fighters discussed or mentioned in any form."

Rodriguez said he had gone to El Salvador in 1985 to help that government implement a helicopter programme to cope with the Salvadoran guerrillas.

At the end of 1985, "I was marginally involved with the Nicaraguan freedom fighters. I never had any knowledge of how they received their funds, nor did I have any control over the personnel of this group," he said.

Eugene Hasenfus, the American gunrunner captured and convicted by the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, said a man who called himself "Gomez" was one of two CIA men running the supply operation.



Honduran babies adopted for body parts

TEGUCIGALPA (R) — Foreigners have adopted Honduran babies and then sold their body parts for use in organ transplants, a Honduran official said in a newspaper interview.

Leonardo Villeda Bermudez, secretary general of the National Social Welfare Commission, said many of the babies had physical deformities. "At first it was believed that they were noble people who took these children because they really felt affection for them," Villeda said in an interview with La Tribuna newspaper. "But with time it was discovered that they wanted to sell them for parts."

"For example, they would take out their eyes for needy children and use them in body parts trafficking...," he said. He said the practice was discovered by government investigators and that adoption procedures had been tightened to prevent such practices.

There were no reports of injuries in the blaze in Bombay's north eastern suburb of Mankhurd.

Bombay firemen blamed the blaze, which started late Friday, on a lit cigarette apparently thrown near a leaking pipeline that runs through the slum.

The fire spread quickly in the surrounding areas, burning hundreds of shacks, firemen said. At least 20 fire engines were sent to the scene and brought the blaze under control after three hours, firemen said.

The state-owned Hindustan Petroleum Pipeline takes diesel 125 kilometres south west from Bombay to Pune.

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GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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LUCKY SPADES

North-South vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH
♠ A Q 10
♥ Q J 4 3
♦ T 5 2
♣ A 3 2

WEST
♠ K J
♥ 7 6
♦ A K J 10 4
♣ 10 7 6 4

EAST
♠ 8 7 6 5
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